Dynamics and Promotion Triads in Meeting Destinations

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Published in:
Events and Meetings in the City

Publication date:
2009

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND LAW

Centre for Tourism

European Cities Marketing Annual Conference & General Assembly, 17-20 June 2009

Events and Meetings in the City

Conference Proceedings
Research Symposium, 17 June 2009

Centre for Tourism
School of Business, Economics and Law,
University of Gothenburg
Göteborg, Sweden

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ISBN 978-91-978258-0-1

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FOREWORD

The 2009 annual conference and general assembly of European Cities Marketing (ECM) was held in Göteborg, Sweden, between June 17-20, 2009, with the theme EVENTS AND MEETINGS IN THE CITY. It was a pleasure for us to organize the special one-day research symposium that took place at the School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg, including keynote speeches and paper presentations. This symposium was followed by workshops in the main conference program that brought researchers and practitioners together to discuss issues and generate new ideas. This was a unique event, designed exclusively to bridge the gaps between researchers and practitioners.

The research symposium was organized by the Centre for Tourism at the School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg. The aims of this day was to advance events research as a thriving interdisciplinary field of the social science and to provide a forum for research collaboration and the mentoring of emerging event researchers. The morning offered five key-note speeches. Professor Donald Getz spoke on Events and the community followed by Professor Tommy Andersson, who spoke on the economic impacts of mega-events. After the coffee break Professor Ulrich Wünsch discussed an epistemological client-centered approach to corporate events, Dr. Mia Larson had a talk on perspectives and metaphors of event networks and Dr. Joe Goldblatt had an entertaining talk on how to re-focus events in the twenty-first century. In the afternoon there were three parallel streams of paper presentations – discussing sport events, meetings, and festivals/cultural events. All in all there were 24 presentations. The full papers submitted to the conference are published here – all are part of the cutting-edge research front within the event research field of today. Enjoy.

Dr. Mia Larson and Dr. Sanja Vujicic

Co- organizers of the ECM conference

PROGRAM

09:00 -09:30 Welcome
Moderator: Lena Mossberg, University of Gothenburg

09:05 -09:30 Events and the Community
Moderator: Donald Getz, University of Gothenburg, University of Queensland

09:30 -10:00 The Economic Impact of Mega-Events
Moderator: Tommy D.Andersson, University of Gothenburg

10:30 -11:00 Urban Paradise Revisited – an Epistemioligical, Client-centered, Approch to Corporate Events
Moderator: Ulrich Wünsch, International University of Applied Sciences Bad Honnef, Bonn

11:00 -11:30 Perspectives and Metaphors of event Networks
Moderator: Mia Larson, University of Gothenburg

13:00 -13:45 A Kaleidoscope of Opportunities: Re-focusing Events in the Twenty-first Century
Moderator: Joe Goldblatt, Queen Margaret University of Edinburg

13:45 -15:15 Parallel Sessions A1-4 Meetings
Room: E44
Moderator: Karl Wöber, MODUL University of Vienna, Austria.

A1 Vivienne S. McCabe (University of South Australia), *Growing and Maintaining a Sustainable Business Events Sector: A view from Australia*

A2 Szilvia Gyimóthy (Aalborg University, Denmark and University of Gothenburg, Sweden) and Mia Larson (University of Gothenburg, Sweden), *Dynamics and Promotion Triads in Meeting Destinations*

A3 Ingvar Tjostheim and Bård Tronvoll (Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University), *City Marketing with New Technology*

A4 Lynn Minnaert and Rob Davidson (University of Westminster, UK), *Planning ´Social Legacy´ Activities for Conferences Delegates*

15:45 - 17:15 Parallel Sessions B1-4 Sport Events
Room: E44
Moderator: Mia Larson, University of Gothenburg

B1 Douglas Michael Turco (Drexel University, USA), *Sport in the City: the Search for Serious Sports Tourists*

B2 Felix Piazolo (University of Innsbruck, Austria), Mathias Fuchs (Mid Sweden University), Wolfram Höpken (University of Applied Sciences Doggenriedstraße, Germany) and Kurt Promberger (University of Innsbruck, Austria), *Intelligent Local Based Information: The Euro2008TM Experience from Innsbruck*

B3 Malin Zillinger and Robert Pettersson (Mid Sweden University, Sweden), *Event Visitor and Their Experiences – a Study of the Biathlon World Championships 2008 in Östersund, Sweden*

B4 Donald Getz (University of Gothenburg, Sweden and Queensland University, Australia) and Tommy D. Andersson (University of Gothenburg, Sweden), *Comparing The Event-Tourists ´Careers´ of High and Low-Involvement Runners*

13:45 -15:15 Parallel Sessions C1-4 Festivals and Cultural Events

Room: E43
Moderator: Donald Getz, University of Gothenburg and Queensland University

C1 Ruth Yeung and Wallace Yee (Institute for Tourism Studies, Macau), *Festivals and Cultural Events: A Comparative Study Between Local Residents and Tourists in Spontaneous Purchase*

C2 Irem Arsal, Valeria Croce and Clemens Költringer (MODUL University of Vienna, Austria), *Cultural Heritage Shaping Online Destination Image Over Time*

C3 Charles Arcodia and Chantal Dickson (University of Queensland, Australia), *Promoting Sustainable Event Practice: The role of Professional Associations*

C4 Rein Ahas (University of Tartu, Estonia), Harald Pechlaner (Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany) and Kati Nilbe (University of Tartu, Estonia) *Developing Event Marketing Strategies with Mobile Telephone Positioning Data: Case Study with Lindora Agricultural Fair in Estonia*

15:45 - 17:15 Parallel Sessions D1-4 Festivals and Cultural Events
Room: E43
Moderator: Szilvia Gyimóthy, Aalborg University and University of Gothenburg

D1 Kari Jaeger (University Collage, Norway) and Reidar J. Mykletun (Norwegian School of Hotel Management), *Festivals as Rebuilders of Place Identity*

D2 Steve Brown and Daniella Trimbolli (Flinders University, Australia), *Policy Shift in the Evaluation of Festivals and Events*

D3 Fabiola Peirera, Rubina Santos, Antonio Pais, Virgilio Silvia and Fernando Colmenero Ferreira (University of Madeira), *A Bridge*

	between the Social Responsibility and the City Materialized in a Biennial Cultural Event
D4	Valentina Della Corte, Guiseppina Zamparelli and Ramona Brancaccio (Universita degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, Italy), *Innovation in Event Management Strategies: Event as a Leverage of Cities´ Promotion*

13:45 -15:15 Parallel Sessions E1-4 **Festivals and Cultural Events**

Room: E45
Moderator: Tommy D. Andersson, University of Gothenburg

E1	Reidar J. Mykletun (University of Stavanger, Norway) and Kari Einarsen (Markedshøyskolen Campus Kristiania, Norway), *Managing Festival Safety – A Case Study of Stavanger Food Festival (the Gladmatfestival) in Norway*
E2	Renata Tomljenovic and Zrinka Marusic (Institute for Tourism, Zagreb, Croatia), *A Power of Festivals in Attracting Purposeful Cultural Visitors*
E3	Nishant Pyasi (University of Calgary, Canada), *Events, Tourism, and Sustainability – A classification and Research Proposal*
E4	Ulrich Wünsch (International University of Applied Science Bad Honnef-Bonn, Germany), *Mind the Gap - Some Remarks on the Construction of Experiences as Special Experiences*

15:45 - 17:15 Parallel Sessions F1-4 **Festivals and Cultural Events**
Room: E45
Moderator: Renata Tomljenovic, Institute for Tourism, Zagreb

F1	Amelia Tomasevic (Zagreb School of Management, Croatia), *Zagreb Time Machine – Creating New Attractions*
F2	Solomaz Filiz Karabag (Linköping University, Sweden), Mehmet Cihan Yavuz (Cukurova University, Turkey) and Christian Berggren (Linköping University, Sweden), *The Impact of Festivals on the Promotion and Communication of a City: a Comparative Study of Turkish and Swedish Festivals*
F3	Harald Pechlaner (Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany/European Academy Bolzano, Italy) and Giuliia Dal Bo (European Academy Bolzano, Italy), *Customer Satisfaction with Cultural Events: The South Tyrolean Christmas Markets*
F4	Vera Gouveia Barros and Antonio Almeida (University of Madeira), *Cultural Events in Madeira: Do they Attract Tourists?*

CONTENT

Meetings

GROWING AND MAINTAINING A BUSINESS EVENTS SECTOR: A VIEW FROM AUSTRALIA

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Abstract
This paper outlines a range of challenges that currently face the Business Events sector in Australia and explores how these challenges might be addressed in order to harness a range of potential opportunities that will ensure the future growth and development of the sector and its long term sustainability. In a highly competitive global marketplace factors identified relate to the need to drive demand, the sectors potential to meet that demand, impacts from climate change and sustainability together with speed of technological innovation. Potential opportunities that can assist the country address the challenges include ensuring co-operation, collaboration and partnerships between industry stakeholders, provision of a 'trusted voice' to the industry, embracing Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives and for the industry in Australia to become a leader in the provision of 'green' events together with strategies to ensure the development of a sustainable workforce.

Key words: Business Events: conventions: industry challenges: sustainability

Introduction
Globally the Business Events sector has grown exponentially over the last 10 -15 years as cities, regions and countries have seen the potential of this lucrative, high yield, 'blue chip' sector of the tourism industry and its positive economic benefits in terms of direct and indirect earnings. In the fast expanding marketplace Australia is recognised and seen to be a key player in the worldwide Business Events industry. Impacts from the highly successful Sydney Olympic Games (2000) together with the recognition of the country's record in innovation, provision of high quality facilities and infrastructure together with the professionalism of its' staff and their service delivery (McCabe, Poole, Weeks and Leiper 2000) has led to the country being able to 'punch well above its weight and size' in the global Business Events industry. The sector provides in excess of 17.35 billion dollars per year in direct and indirect earnings to the Australian economy (NBES 2005) with the net worth of the industry far exceeding this figure as it promotes and showcases Australian expertise and innovation in the international arena (BECA 2008). From the newly emergent industry that developed positively and assertively in the 1990's the sector has now matured. The last few years has however presented a range of challenges as the Australian Business Events industry faces stiff international competition

from both traditional and newly emergent markets. Increased competition from Asia and Gulf States of the Middle East together with a range of global, regional and local events have impacted upon the sector. The country's pre eminent status as No 1 convention destination for association meetings in the Asia Pacific region in 2000 has now fallen; market share is being lost and the country has now slipped out of the top ten country ratings reported by ICCA (ICCA 2008).

Australian Business Events Industry stakeholders have long seen the need to take a proactive and positive approach to the internal and external challenges that the sector faces (Dwyer and Mistilis 1999:81). In the ever expanding global Business Events industry and with an urgent need to address the current global economic crisis, industry leaders recognise that they cannot be complacent if they are to ensure the growth and development of the sector, its long term sustainability and for the country to maintain its position and status in the global meetings industry.

This paper will outline some of the challenges that the Australian Business Events industry faces and discuss how these challenges can and are being addressed in order to 'harness' potential opportunities that will ensure the sector's future growth, development and long term sustainability. Though the paper focuses on the industry in Australia comments made have relevance to other countries.

Business Events in Australia

The Australian Business Events industry has always tried to be proactive in ensuring the development of a sustainable industry. It is widely accepted within the country that in order to do business and trade within the global environment there is a need to be proactive, to 'go the extra mile,' and 'think outside the square.'

The significant contribution of the Business Events sector to the national and regional economies plus the unique benefits that the sector provides has been recognised by industry stakeholders. This successful, highly lucrative, high yield sector is actively sought by national governments and industry stakeholders worldwide. Dwyer et al. (2009) argue that in order to adopt principles of sustainability yield per visitor not number of visitors is an effective measure of sustainability. Business Events provide an extremely high yield per delegate. The sector also provides a number of other benefits, such as, the opportunity to showcase expertise and innovation, the ability to attract global leaders and investment decision makers, stimulate business activity and strengthen business links. It also facilitates the opportunity to access new technology, exchange ideas and establish valuable business, professional, social and cultural links (Commonwealth Dept of Tourism 1995).

From the late 1980's, with the development of the first purpose built convention and exhibition centres, through the 1990's there has been rapid, determined and continued expansion and development of the sector. A co-ordinated approach to gaining business, success in bidding together with events and activities, such as the Sydney 2000 Olympics, Centenary of Federation have profiled Australia as a leading and world class destination for Business Events not only in terms of its facilities, levels of infrastructure and development but also in respect of the quality and professionalism of its staff. Today Australian Business Events organisations and their personnel are highly sought after on the global stage.

Since 2000 however the country has suffered from increasing competition and an annual loss in convention and exhibition visitors (BECA 2008). Further investigation has revealed that though the number of international business events being hosted within the country has increased, market share has decreased, whilst within the domestic market there has been a decline in overnight and day visitors and in their spend. The domestic Business Events industry is estimated to provide 80% of the total value of the industry and as such is a very important component.

The current global economic crisis has also seriously affected the Business Events sector worldwide. There is a decline in the number of attendees to conferences and a reduction in average expenditure per delegate. According to Pizam (2009:301), the more affluent customers are ‘trading down’ (purchasing a lower priced version of the product) because it is socially undesirable to be seen to be spending lavishly at this time. This is a situation that is expected to continue for the near future.

Globally the Business Events sector is therefore operating in an environment of stiff competition and rapid change. It has been argued by Dwyer et al. (2009:63) that in order for the Business Events industry in Australia to achieve competitive advantage, stakeholders to the industry need to understand not only the drivers of economic change, but also the direction of these changes and subsequently what they mean for their business and the destination.

Challenges to the Australian Business Events Industry

In the face of change and increasing competition on the world stage the Business Events sector in Australia faces a number of challenges that need to be addressed if the industry is to gain and maintain its competitive advantage and ensure continued sustainability. These challenges relate to the need to drive demand within the sector, ensure its ability to facilitate and meet that demand through the currency of its convention and exhibition product, address issues that relate to climate change and sustainability and embrace the rapid development and introduction of new technologies.

Need to drive demand

The need to drive demand is vital for the ongoing sustainability of the industry. In an increasingly competitive environment countries aggressively seek to grow their share of the world market and gain the lucrative convention dollar. New destinations, such as those in Asia and the Gulf States, that offer a range of state of the art facilities and infrastructure, are coming on board. As a result Australia is expected to continue to lose market share as other countries invest heavily in their marketing of this sector (BECA 2008).

Sustainability of demand is critically important to the industry. The hosting of international conventions and exhibitions provides significant benefits not only to local communities but to the economy as a whole. It is therefore important to the Australian economy to not only maintain but increase demand in its international and domestic markets. Prior to the current global financial crisis forecast inbound tourism numbers were expected to increase by 4.4% though it is recognised that the industry is also susceptible to fluctuations in exchange rates, fuel prices and economic crises (BECA 2008). Growth in the domestic market also presents a key dilemma due to the country’s small population base and the lack of potential for growth. There is therefore a need to ensure that the overall marketing of the sector (both internationally and domestically), is both effective and innovative; that there is active participation in the bidding for events together with support for delegate boosting strategies once the event has been gained.

Yet recent comments have been made of a current under investment in the marketing of the Australian Business Events sector to the global community (BECA 2008: V1) and of the requirement for more government funding to support the sector. The Business Events sector in Australia is highly fragmented with a predominance of small businesses. As such, there may be an inability by the industry to comprehensively fund its’ own marketing and capture on an international scale a fair return on investment (BECA 2008: VI). Under investment in marketing can lead to market failure. There is a belief that the Australian government should increase its Business Events funding so a more effective and comprehensive marketing presence in the global marketplace can be provided (BECA 2008:V1). This is particularly relevant to the gaining of international association conventions, an area of decline in market share.

Need to meet demand

Facilities and Infrastructure

Over the last fifteen to twenty years Australian industry stakeholders have invested heavily in facilities and infrastructure to support the development of a newly emergent Business Events sector. The country's convention and exhibition centres and venues are recognised as world class and as such attract prestigious events. They are highly rated by global peers and their clients. Whilst Australia has been keen to develop and maintain the currency of its facilities and infrastructure through the building of new and the expansion of existing purpose built convention and exhibition centres in all major cities, there has also been an explosion of developments in key Asian countries. The newly emergent destinations of China (Macau), Thailand and Malaysia together with the Gulf States of the Middle East have invested heavily in modern purpose built facilities and have developed rapidly within the Business Events marketplace. They also have the benefit of financial and other government support (BECA 2008). These destinations have the potential to pose real competition to the Australian industry not only in respect of their facilities and pricing structures but in their ease of accessibility for potential delegates from the traditional markets of Europe. As the Business Events industry in Australia enters a more mature stage of its development, a challenge facing the sector is to ensure the continual updating of its facilities and infrastructure, address any areas of shortfall and ensure that such facilities continue to be 'cutting edge,' contemporary and competitive in the global marketplace.

Accessibility

Ease of entry into and access within Australia for international and domestic delegates is a further challenge for the sector. Australia is a long haul destination and as such there is a need to overcome the perception that the country is too far away from its major source markets. In addition, the sheer geographic size of the country ensures that its airlines, airport facilities and associated infrastructure are primary and key stakeholders in the provision of the convention and exhibition product. If the industry is to grow it is believed that there is a need for both international and domestic airlines to continually review their capacity and ease access for potential delegates to the countries convention and exhibition facilities (Commonwealth Dept. of Tourism 1995: BECA 2008). This may be achieved through, for example, improvements in the speed of processing international delegates through border controls, access to visas, together with improvements to the scheduling and planning of flights to the countries emerging regional convention and exhibition destinations (Commonwealth Dept. of Tourism 1995: BECA 2008).

Workforce Skills and Training

The expansion of the Business Events sector worldwide has provided the need for a highly skilled quality work force to support this growth. The industry is seen as a provider of excellent job opportunities, is attractive as a career and to provide the potential for accelerated promotion (McCabe 2001: 294, Commonwealth Dept of Tourism 1995:37). The need to focus on workforce skills and training has been identified as a key issue (BECA 2008; Commonwealth Dept. of Tourism 1995).

Consequently a range education programs within the field of events and business events have emerged as educational institutions seek to address this need. These specifically designed programs and courses provided by tertiary and other institutions offer a range of courses from certificate level through to specific undergraduate and Master degree programs that focus on Events and Business Events. Industry accreditation programs have also been introduced by the sectors key associations to ensure the continued development of the professionalism of the sector.

Australian staff are recognised and sought worldwide for their expertise in delivering world class events. Commitment to the sector is seen to be high with many positive features to employment apparent (McCabe 2006). Yet despite many employees being attracted to the industry there is still a shortage of well qualified, quality personnel being retained within the sector. In addition more recently the sector has and is seeing changes as existing leaders and stalwarts of the industry retire and a new generation of employees are attracted to the sector. There is now a need for new industry leaders to emerge and to drive the industry.

Information to Support Business Decisions

The Business Events industry has long recognised the need for timely, credible industry research by which government agencies and other organisations can reliably evaluate the performance of the sector and enable informed decisions to be made (Commonwealth Dept of Tourism 1995).

A number of factors impact on the provision of such data. Factors such as size, structure and fragmentation of the industry has meant that there is no unified method of data collection or a single body responsible for its collection. In addition difficulties in the non comparability of information provided, difficulties with definitions, accuracy of information provided together with the cost of data collection, response rates and potential issues that relate to confidentiality of information (Ladkin in Weber and Chon 2002) have added to the challenge. Within Australia, the industry and its stakeholders have undertaken a number of important and comprehensive studies that have been supported and funded by government or government funded organisations, such as the Co-operative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism (NBES 2005; Crouch and Louviere 2007: Crouch and Louviere 2004), whilst individual convention bureaus undertake delegate studies for their destination in order to assess the contribution of Business Events (Adelaide Convention Delegate Study 2007). Other data on the sector is gathered, for example, through passenger surveys undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. To date much of this information has been gathered intermittently and has been neither consistent nor comparable. The challenge for the Business Events industry is to identify, facilitate and actively engage in the provision of research so that industry stakeholders can be provided with data that is reliable, consistent and presented in a timely fashion.

Climate change and sustainability

Globally climate change, the impact of greenhouse gases, the carbon footprint and the need to follow sustainable environmental practices are of major concern; as such they present a major challenge. In the global marketplace key markets for the Business Events industry are adopting principles of sustainability to underpin their delivery of Business Events. Meeting planners are increasingly seeking information on potential venues and services for Business Events that enable them to provide events that are more sustainable. Hotels and other such venues are actively pursuing the trend towards long term investment in green hotels (Pizam 2009:301). ‘Green’ accreditation programs have been established.

Australia's geographic location means that it is viewed as a long haul Business Events destination. As such, there are many negative arguments and environmental concerns within the global community, particularly from such key feeder markets as Europe, UK and the USA, to choosing Australia for a Business Event (BECA 2008). The need to introduce and implement sustainable environmental practices (Commonwealth Dept. of Tourism 1995) has been recognised by the sector in Australia for a number of years. In the current highly competitive environment and with a worldwide requirement to be 'green' and offset carbon emissions etc. it is imperative that the Business Events sector in Australia has exemplary credentials in all aspects of its business in this key area.

Technological Impacts

The Business Events sector in Australia has accepted and embraced the importance and value of technology and technological advances (Commonwealth Dept. of Tourism 1995). A high level of technological sophistication has and is required by the industry and its clients (BECA 2008:23) as a business and operational aid, through on line conference information and registration systems and in the provision of operational equipment, use of the internet, wireless, broadband and audio visual aids, speaker presentations etc. It is also used in the marketing of events with requests for on line business proposals from industries suppliers. It is imperative that industry stakeholders, particularly those in venues and meeting management, ensure they embrace the speed of technological change if they are to be considered a serious player within the marketplace.

The speed and sophistication of technological innovation, through the development of the internet, broadband width, wireless and growth in virtual conferencing systems, has also impacted upon the industry. Business Events and the products of Business Events are recognised as an effective communications medium (McCabe et al. 2000: 3). The current growth in virtual conferences, teleconferencing and the trend towards web based learning and on-line seminars, together with changes resulting from the current global economic crisis, green issues and travel costs, poses a challenge for the Business Events industry if it is to maintain its position within the communications environment.

Addressing the challenges

If the challenges facing the sector are to be addressed and the country is to maintain its position in the global marketplace then there is a need to take a positive and proactive approach. The Business Events industry has a number of fundamental opportunities that can play a key role to its overall sustainability. These opportunities relate to ensuring co-operation, collaboration and partnerships between industry stakeholders, providing a 'trusted voice' to the industry- locally and globally, ensuring the on-going development of infrastructure and facilities, embracing and becoming a world leader in the greening of business events and ensuring the development of a sustainable workforce who are well prepared to lead the industry in the future.

Co-operation, collaboration and partnerships between stakeholders

If the Business Events industry in Australia is to continue to be sustainable then it must ensure that it not only maintains but develops its existent strength of effective collaboration, co-operation and cohesion. The size of the country's population and number of industry players means that there is undoubtedly an opportunity to effectively continue to harness the power within this group, enable it to operate as a cohesive force and to be a catalyst for action. It is imperative that there be no factions; that the industry continues to work together as a unified body mindful of each other, with clear aims and objectives, through a cohesive and well established structure. Meaningful partnerships must continue to be developed between individuals, companies, other organisations, government and government agencies. Only then can such benefits as innovation, acquisition of new skills and knowledge, business development and a sharing of resources derived from working in such inter – organisational networks(MacKellor 2006) be realised.

An example of such collaboration and co-operation is apparent in the recently prepared and developed *National Business Events Strategy for Australia 2020* whereby the Minister of Tourism convened a joint government and industry working group of key stakeholders to prepare a National Strategy for the Business Events industry for the period until 2020. The strategy brief was wide ranging and included a comprehensive examination of the issues that affected both supply and demand together with the identification of impediments and opportunities that face the sector in Australia. On completion the Strategy presented a number of wide ranging recommendations that addressed many of the issues identified together with a process for implementation. A key outcome of the Strategy was the establishment of a Joint Strategy Implementation Group and the set up of reporting relationships to monitor its implementation. The membership of this group comprises of representatives from each sector of the Business Events industry together with key government related organisations. This group has already met and is in operation.

In the design, development and delivery of such a document that so critically affects the overall sustainability of the industry and its organisations, it is of paramount importance that consultation occurs and input is received from all sectors. Only then can there be a full commitment and ownership of its outcomes. Business Events industry associations have been actively involved in the strategy development process – not only convening planning meetings of their membership, representing their membership on working parties - but also in the dissemination of information from the strategy to their membership through seminars and conferences.

Effective Lobbying

Business Event industry leaders have long recognised the benefit of initiating and maintaining contact with key government minsters and their departments (Commonwealth Dept. Of Tourism 1995) in order to promote the benefits of the industry and ensure appropriate government ministers are aware and have knowledge of the sector and its benefits. It is imperative that the industry, through key groups, such as BECA, continues a cohesive and sustained approach to gain and maintain federal and state government support. This can be achieved through effective, consistent and appropriate lobbying to ensure that Business Events and its importance to the nation’s economy is kept on the political agenda. The establishment of Business Events Strategy group with established reporting outcomes should assist in this area.

Collaboration in marketing the destination

There is the opportunity for Tourism Australia through Business Events Australia to lead and undertake a range of new marketing initiatives, as part of a global trade marketing program, to promote Australia as a sustainable Business Events destination, (Business Events Australia 2008). Collaboration between the major players, nationally and within the states, provides the potential for the design and implementation of a range of strategies designed to increase demand both internationally and domestically. For example, the development of partnerships between Level 1 and 2 cities and regions in order to showcase new destinations and facilities, the opportunity for a city to repackage its Business Events products. Whilst within the international arena it may be timely to rebid on a number of international association events that had previously been successfully held within the country.

National and State tourism bodies together with the convention bureaus should continue to ensure that innovative, cost effective methods are used to promote and profile Australia as a Business Events destination. The adoption and innovative use of the rapidly developing social networking sites and advancements in e-marketing provide an excellent opportunity in this area. The network of Australian convention bureaus are a major player in the distribution network for gaining Business Events for a city or region. An effective collaborative partnership between the convention bureau and their local providers continues to be essential if innovative and viable initiatives are to be generated and implemented. Such initiatives benefit from the support of local and state government.

Provide a 'Trusted Voice' to the Global Industry

The Business Events sector in Australia has earned an excellent reputation worldwide. As the sector enters maturity there is the potential opportunity for it to provide a 'trusted voice' not only nationally for stakeholders within the sector, but also in the global marketplace. The 'trusted voice' might be developed through such activities as the provision of ongoing reliable and consistent research data that is recognised nationally and internationally and fulfils the requirements of the sector; in the use of trusted ethical and ecological practices; through transparency and integrity in business dealings and ensuring that trust is implicit and maintained in the business practices of all stakeholder groups working together to provide a successful event. In the current economic environment Meetings and Venue Managers should ensure stewardship of their and their client's resources and deliver Business Events that have a range of quantifiable and qualitative measurable outcomes. There could also be the development and adoption of a range of industry standards and quality initiatives, embedded in workplace practices that provide a national standard. The introduction of such practices would impact upon the global industry through the provision by Australian organisations of a reliable, consistent high quality product – the Business Event - that is continually innovative and is supplied by a highly qualified expert team.

On - Going Development of Infrastructure and Facilities

In a highly competitive global marketplace and with the development of many new destinations with state of the art facilities there is a need to ensure that facilities and infrastructure development are at ' cutting edge' and that they cater for the growing needs and demands of international conventions and exhibitions and their delegates. All major cities in Australia have the facility of a modern, purpose built convention and exhibition centre. These have been continually updated and extended, for example, as in Brisbane and Canberra. In addition many second tier cities and regional centres such as Alice Springs, have, on a smaller scale, built such facilities thereby gaining the direct and indirect economic benefits of the convention dollar.

It has also been reported that a total of over A$5.7billion investment in infrastructure in public / partnership funding is scheduled to be or has been invested in new facilities and infrastructure to service the Business Events sector (Business Events Australia a 2008:4). From capital cities, regional areas and the outback development has and is planned to occur across all sectors of the industry, such as, venues, purpose built convention and exhibition centres, luxury accommodation. These developments are supported by the latest technology and infrastructure.

Investment in transport infrastructure, another critical component in the provision of a successful event, has also occurred through the development of new airport terminals and in the redevelopment of existing airports in key cities such as Adelaide, Perth and Melbourne. Such investment in facilities and appropriate infrastructure provides evidence of the country's firm commitment to the sector and of its confidence in the ability to deliver world class business events. Yet despite this continued investment there is still a need in some areas to provide further investment in facilities and in the provision of top quality (5 star) hotel space to support demand (BECA 2008).

Address and Embrace Environmental Concerns

In recognition of the need to address environmental concerns and of the demand to deliver Business Events that have a strong and environmental focus Tourism Australia (through Business Events Australia) and industry stakeholders have undertaken a National Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Audit for the sector (Business Events Australia b 2009). The audit gathered information from stakeholders on their CSR credentials and provided not only an inventory of 'best practice,' but provided a useful insight into how the sector is performing in relation to CSR and green accreditation. Results from the audit demonstrate that Australia is a sustainable Business Events destination and one where the environment is valued and protected.

The audit also provided an opportunity for the Business Events industry to 'highlight their expertise, products, and commitment to sustainability' (Business Events Australia 2008) and demonstrates the country's reputation and commitment globally to the provision of sustainable events. In addition, the industry as a whole is now better informed about the country's green and socially responsible operators. For example the new Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre, is identified as the world's first '6 star green Star Environment rating convention centre whilst Adelaide Convention Centre is shown to be the recipient of a number of national and international awards in this area.

A further outcome of the audit indicates that operators across all sectors of the industry are able to assist their clients provide more responsible events that benefit not only their clients but other operators and the host community. The sector is well on the way to developing socially responsible and ecologically sustainable practices and is committed to developing best practice in order to achieve this (Business Events Australia b 2009: 20). It was also apparent from the audit that it is the organisations that employ over 100 people that are showing and driving industry leadership in this area. Smaller organisations lack familiarity with and experience some difficulty in gathering information and CSR credentials and to gain appropriate accreditation: further education is required in this area. It was also evident that there is a gap in the commitment to improvement of CSR policies and the actual undertaking of benchmarking activities by some suppliers to the sector, whilst it was apparent that a number of organisations though not directly participating in offset programs are using other strategies, such as locally sourcing products and services.

Development of a Sustainable and Flexible Workforce

There is an imperative need to ensure the continued development of a sustainable and flexible workforce in all sectors of the industry. The importance of the industry and the potential employment opportunities available in all its sectors should be recognised and highlighted along with outline career trajectories. Only then will the long term viability of a career in the sector be explicit for future employees. McCabe & Savery (2007) have identified that in the progression of a career individuals move into and within the Business Events industry; as such they 'butterfly' between sectors, organisations and job roles in order to build up skills and enhance their human capital. Therefore in employee recruitment a potential employer should be ready to accept and embrace such movement for the benefits that it may bring in the transfer of knowledge.

Whilst it is recognised that employees may leave an organisation in order to develop their career, strategies for the attraction and retention of employees within the industry as a whole need to be reviewed and revised in order to retain quality staff. Employees who have been identified as 'rising stars' could be mentored by current industry leaders for future leadership roles with appropriate individualised strategies used to ensure their continued development within the sector. Industry organisations could ensure that their part- time and casual flexible workforce are recognised as forming an integral part of the company's workforce and provide access to associated benefits such as attendance at training courses. Whilst at a strategic level, employee recruitment to key areas of industry shortfall could be encouraged through the recognition by national government of the Business Events as an industry sector that warrants specialist attention for potential immigration. Human resource practices should be current and benchmarked with other industry sectors. Compensation and benefits packages should be competitive.

The continued availability of recognised training and development programs for industry employees is fundamental to the overall success of the sector. Such programs could however be supported by the introduction of industry wide training and development passports that enable an employee to build up their professional profile. It would assist in gaining industry accreditation and potentially lead to gaining recognised academic qualifications. Such a strategy could aid retention within the sector.

Conclusion

In the current global economic and business climate there is an imperative need to ensure that the industry reacts, respond and reposition itself to the demands of rapidly changing attitudes in the wider global marketplace. Stakeholders to the Australian Business Events sector need to embrace these changes. Current business practices and systems should be reviewed and revised in order to maximise business opportunities and in preparation for the upturn in business confidence and the resultant business. Innovation and entrepreneurship within organisations should be embraced and encouraged.

This paper has identified a range of challenges that Australia faces as a Business Events destination. These challenges relate to the need to drive demand in a highly competitive global marketplace together with factors that may impede the country's ability to meet the demands of an increasingly discerning conference and exhibition sector and its delegates. A range of fundamental opportunities that can assist the sector in Australia address the challenges in a positive and proactive way have been outlined and explored. Key to achieving all of these is a consolidated, co-ordinated, cohesive and structured approach with all stakeholder groups working together in a unified fashion.

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CITY MARKETING WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY

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Abstract
The aim of this article is to identify variables that increase the intention to visit a city as a tourist destination. The study emphasizes new 3D technology and whether or not it has an impact on the intention to visit a city. An experimental design was chosen containing two computer mediated environments and two questionnaires. The assignment in the computer mediated environment was framed as "sightseeing on the screen." The visual from the game *PGR4* featuring Las Vegas was combined with a narrative from a Las Vegas audio guide. The analysis shows that the interface, the presentation format had an effect on the intention to visit the city. The analysis showed further that the individuals from US were more influenced by the presentation, i. e. the sightseeing in the VE than the European participants. This study gives insight in potential effects of 3D and virtual environments in a travel and tourism context.

Keywords: city marketing, Virtual reality /VR, 3D, telepresence and sense of place

Introduction
At all time, researchers and practitioners have been concerned about how to attract customers'. The company's ability to attract customers' has an important influence on the company's market share, profitability, viability, and future revenue stream in today's competitive marketplace (Ganesh et al., 2000; Rust et al., 1995). Therefore, it is vital to understand the travellers' behaviour and hence what influence the intention to visit a certain destination. As part of the technological development and the quick technological adaption from the tourist industry it becomes clearly a need to investigate this phenomenon. The concept of a virtual environment for sightseeing activities may seem somewhat contradictory as noted in the tourism literature. Travelling is about going to places and being there, and not having tourism experience only by using the imagination, looking at photos or motion pictures while being at home. Sightseeing is one of the most common activities undertaken by tourists. Usually it has been understood as either discourse (Adler, 1989) or as a process of 'gazing', i.e., the visual consumption of a place (MacCannell, 1976; Urry, 1990). Place theory interprets the human experience of place by residents and non-residents. Visitors belong to the latter category; they are outsiders who have an interest in a place, but are not necessarily attachment to the place (Relph, 1976). With new gaming technology, virtual environments (VEs) mimicking places such as tourism destination can be made with a high level of realism and attention to details. However, it does not mean that a virtual environment mimicking a destination will be a good marketing tool.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the intention to visit a destination after or as a consequence of doing virtual sightseeing. In this paper we address to what degree the feeling of being there, telepresence has an effect on intention to visit the destination. The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 reviews the theoretical framework, including the intention to visit a destination, the concepts of intention sightseeing, telepresence and sense of place. Based on the literature review four hypotheses are presented. Section 3 outlines our research method, the operationalisation of variables, and the experiment procedure. Section 4 presents the data analysis and results. Lastly, section 5 offers a discussion of the results and a conclusion.

Theoretical framework

Intention to visit

Intention to visit is the traveller's individual expectation about his/her own behaviour in a given setting. It can be operationalised as the likelihood to act (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). According to Ajzen (1985), the intention to act in a certain way is the immediate determinant of behaviour. Oliver (1997, p. 28) define intention as "a stated likelihood to engage in a behaviour." In the same vein, the intention to visit a destination, in this study, can be described as an affirmed likelihood to visit the destination in the future. When there is an opportunity to act, intention results in behaviour; and if intention is measured accurately, intention will provide the best predictor of behaviour (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975, Bearden et al. 1984). A study of travellers with the intention to visit a destination as the response variable could provide insightful information for tourism products and service providers and marketers. According to Tian-Cole and Crompton (2003), a visitor's intention to visit a destination is a determinant of the actual behavior of visiting that destination. Hence behavioral intentions might serve as a surrogate for a destination choice.

In an ecommerce context purchase intentions have been used in several studies (Li et al. 2002, 2003), Suh & Chang, 2006, Jiang (2007). The equivalent to purchase intention is in a tourism context the intention to visit a destination. In studies of human behavior it is shown that a direct experience can influence persuasion (Fazio and Zanna 1978, Wu and Shaffer 1987) and therefore intention to purchase. The studies by Li et al. (2001, 2002, 2003) and Suh & Chang (2006) indicate the 3D has a stronger effect on purchase intention than a 2D presentation format.

Sightseeing

In his seminal works Nelson (1970, 1974) distinguished between search and experience goods. A sightseeing activity, which is a part of a holiday, resembles the characteristics of an experience good. In the current study Las Vegas as a tourist destination is used. The tourism experience consists of a number of components. For many visitors sightseeing is one key component in the overall tourism experience. In tourism research sightseeing is recognized as an activity with long antecedents (Adler, 1989). Several researchers have studied tourists and their motivation for taking part in sightseeing as well as the meaning of the sightseeing to different groups of travelers (Dunn-Ross & Iso-Ahola, 1992), (Tucker (2005). Many destinations offer bus-tours, sightseeing tours to attractions and sights that the place is known for or would like to be known for. In the digital domain for instance in computer mediated environment, the user can do sightseeing. He or she can explore the virtual place, and use the game for a non-gaming purpose. Williams (2006) observes that gamers sometimes visit the "gamespace" i. e. places in the game in the same way as tourists would do. In some games places in our material world are replicated and according to the magazine *Game Fun Time,* October 26th 2008; "*The videogame industry is in the midst of a booming trend towards realism in games.*" Quite often actual photos and models from the place are used in creating the game environment. This is also the case for the Xbox game PGR4.

In the field of tourism it is not uncommon to portrait tourist as sightseers (MacCannell 1976), (Urry, 1990). These authors argue a sightseer as someone that visually consumes a place through the process of gazing. In this gazing there is an element of distance. Watching a place on screen has this element of distance. But there is a difference. In the tourism and most tourism studies travelers are actually there and not sitting at home looking at a screen. The telepresence research is primarily about **not** being there, **not** traveling to the place in the physical sense. In the next section the concept telepresence is discussed.

Computer mediated environments and Telepresence

Patrick Gunkel at Hudson Institute coined the term "telepresence" in 1979. Marvin Minsky (1980) used the term in the his article to refer to teleoperations technology that provides the user with a "remote presence" in a different location via feedback systems that allow her to "see and feel what is happening" there. According to Lombard & Ditton (1997) presence is the perceptual illusion of *non-mediation.* Telepresence is a sense of 'being there' in an environment, generated by means of a communication medium (Steuer 1992). The term presence is often used as a short version for telepresence. Telepresence describes to the sense of *'being there'* experienced by users of media such as virtual reality. In general the concept refers to the psychological state or subjective perception in which a person fails to accurately and completely acknowledge the role of technology in an experience (Lombard & Jones, 2007). Some also argues that telepresence is a product of all media, in varying degrees (Reeves and Nass, 1996). From a conceptual point of view, the field of telepresence is related to tourism, to visits to real or imaginary places. Hence it should be relevant to link investigations in the field of telepresence to the field of tourism. It is about mental remoteness or transportation in telepresence and the notion of the physical remoteness of tourism, i.e., the choice of an individual to *being there*, or somewhere other, away from home. Telepresence shares with tourism the idea of remoteness. In contrast to travel in the material world, telepresence comes about through a feeling or mental transportation to another place. 'Another place' could be either an imagined place that one may fantasize about, or an existing place in the external material world (Losh, 2006, Williams, 2006).

Sense of place

Las Vegas is a place that exists and the PGR4 game replicates this city. Sense of place is not only about the setting, the environment but it is created in the interaction of a setting and the person (Williams and Patterson, 1996). The person brings something to the setting and interacts with the setting and people that are there. Sightseeing can be studied from the perspective of sense of place. The concepts of "space" and "place" are not synonymous. Dourish (2006) writes that "space" describes geometrical arrangements that might structure, constrain, and enable certain forms of movement and interaction, whereas "place" denotes the ways in which settings acquire recognizable and persistent social meaning in the course of interaction." Or as formulated by Turner & Turner (2003) place = space + meaning. In his frequently cited monograph *Place and Placelessnes* Edward Relph (1976) introduces his place theory; a theory that emphases the human experience of place. With new technology such as 3D or VR, places can be quite accurately replicated. This raises some intriguing questions in relation to the users and the user-experience of these VR applications.

Conceptually vicarious is related to *being there*. A vicarious experience is according to Edward Relph to be transported to place through imagination; through paintings, novels, music, films, or other creative media. The tourism product is an experience. It contains a number of elements and it is consumed *in situ*. In the pre-trip stage, a traveler can have vicarious experience. He or she can image what it is like to be there.

Las Vegas a popular destination for Americans

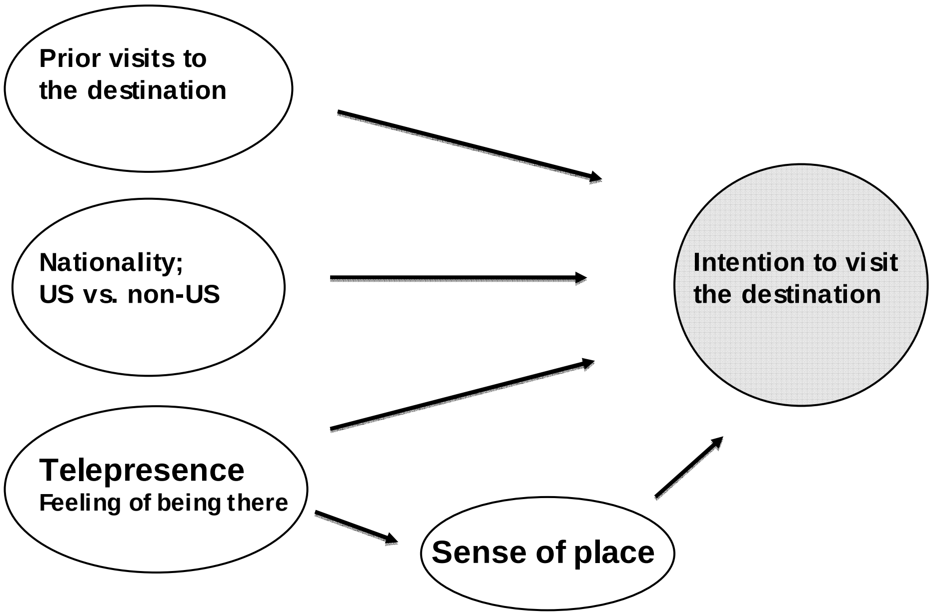
Las Vegas has been and is popular destination for meetings & events, for gambling and tourism in general. Forbes Travel estimated that Las Vegas had 37.5 million visitors in 2008. Moreover, the city is number one on the list of place to go in the next five years, according to Carlson Wagonlit's Trend Survey 2008 for domestic travel. Based on this, we hypothesized that Americans have higher intentions to visit Las Vegas than Europeans.

Research model and hypothesis

Based on the literature review it is hypothesized that the factor prior visits and living in the US has a significant effect on the intention to visit the destination. Moreover, a high degree of telepresence should also be positively associated with intention to visit.

Figure 1 presents the research model and the relationship between the concepts. The research model depicts a relationship that is hypothesized to exist among prior visits, where the person is living, level of telepresence, sense of place and intention to visit the destination.

Figure 2 Research Model



The hypotheses are;

H1 Having visited Las Vegas before significantly influences the intention to visit the destination

H2. Individuals living in the USA have a significantly higher intention to visit Las Vegas than individuals living in Europe.

H3 High telepresence has a significantly stronger effect on intention to visit than low telepresence

H4 Sense of place affects the intention to visit a destination

Research method

The researchers applied an experimental design with two modes of interfaces was chosen, derived from a human geography place construct and the theory of telepresence. The study purpose was to measure to what extent the respondents experienced telepresence and vicarious sense of place. As discussed in a previous section a construct from the field of telepresence was applied to measure the respondents 'being there", i.e., in Las Vegas. Students in two countries were recruited to participate in a task framed as "sightseeing on the screen."

Experiment procedures

An experimental design was chosen to empirically test the research model suggested in the previous section. The experimental design gives the researcher a close control over independent, dependent and possibly confounding variables. The purpose of this design is to achieve a high degree of internal validity. The research design in this study is in many regards similar to Li et al. (2001, 2002 and 2003), Jiang & Benbasat (2005, 2007) and Suh & Chang (2006) who conducted their experiments with products in 3D vs. 2D, and also with other formats such as text and audio. In our study only two formats were used; 2D with narration and 3D with narration.

Students at two different universities; one in Philadelphia, USA and in Hague, the Netherlands took part in this study. All in all 69 students participated in the task assigned by the researcher. The subjects were asked to participate in a sightseeing task. They were told that sightseeing is a common tourism activity and while watching the screen they were asked to *"image the role of a tourist and image that you are seated in a sightseeing bus or car in Las Vegas, looking at the hotels and building and listing to the tour-guide."* Hence the experiment was framed to mimic a normal tourism experience. Furthermore, the respondents were told that the presentation, the images were taken from the video game PGR4, a driving game. According to Alan Mealor, a lead artist at Bizarre Creations, it took one of four teams of five artists 18 to 20 months to build each location in the game. (*BBC news*, Friday, 26 October 2007). A post-test only control-group design for the experiment was chosen. The main reason for this was to minimize unexpected effects of pre-test conditions on post-test evaluations. The scenes, the sections from the Las Vegas strip were selected by the researcher, the first author of the paper. The scenes contained key attractions and hotels in Las Vegas. The audio clips e.g. sound effect and the narration were taken from the *Tourcaster* production "*Las Vegas – The Strip*." In the experiment, the playtime was 7 minutes for both the sightseeing in 2D with narration and for the sightseeing in 3D with narration. In the game setting in PGR4, a motorbike and a motorbike-view (first person view) was chosen in order to get the attention away from the vehicle and on the buildings and the environment. For the *3D with narration* the play-mode in the game setting of PGR4 was used. For the *2D with narrations* the "photo-mode" in the game setting was used.

A between-group design was chosen and the participants were randomly assigned to the groups, the 2D or 3D modes. The test-participants, the sightseers, listened to the guide and looked at the buildings and hotels, but in either a photo-mode or in a 3D-mode (motion). Because of the detailed graphics in the 3D version the size of the file was 2 198 MB vs. 880 MB for the 2D version. Appendix 1 contains photos from the 2D Interface. Prior to undertaking the experiment, a pilot with a group of colleagues was conducted in order to pre-test the procedures and the questionnaire. Based on the pilot, adjustments in the research design were made, subsequently.

Participants' Profile

The experiments were done in a class-room setting. Of the 69 participants who completed the trial, 61% were female and 39% were female. 75% were between 19 and 23 years old. Of the participants 72% answered that they used video or computer games approximately once a month or more seldom.

Variable measures

The feeling of being there was measured by three statements using a 7- points Likert scale, see table 1. The paper by Tjostheim & Go (2009) gives more detailed information regarding how these statements related to the telepresence instrument, the Temple Presence Inventor (TPI), (Lombard & Ditton, 2007). The sense of place measures were developed in this project based on review of Relph's seven types of sense of place (Relph, 1976). A number of authors have argued that Relph's place theory could serve as a foundation for studies in tourism, and in VR and tourism (Shamai 1991, Seamon (1982, 1996), Turner & Turner (2006) Turner et al. (2006), Smith (2003), Smyth et al. (2006) and Benyon et al. (2006).

The experiment was conducted by way of a student sample. Students can be tourists and Las Vegas is a destination that also attracts young people. Young people tend to be typically more familiar with new technology than older people. The type of vacation might also differ by age-groups and travel-preference. Hence, the findings from this study should not be generalized.

Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis techniques applied to interpret data from the experiment were partial least squares (PLS). PLS is a structural equation modeling technique, which can simultaneously estimate measurement components (the reliability and validity of the measures of theoretical constructs) and structural components i.e. the relationships among these constructs (Fornell and Larcker 1981, Barclay et al. 1995). PLS can be use when sample sizes are relative small. Moreover, the technique is appropriate to use when assumptions of multivariate normality and interval scaled data cannot be made, and when the primary concern is with the prediction of dependent endogenous variables (White et al. 2003). As a structural equation modeling tool PLS can also handle formative constructs, and it does not require a large sample size compared to other SEM tools such as LISREL and AMOS (Fornell and Bookstein 1982, Barclay et al. 1995). Moreover, PLS is appropriate for applications and predictions where a research model is not directly based on comprehensive theories (Barclay et al. 1995, Chin et al. 2003).

The main constructs in the measurement model were telepresence, sense of place, prior visits and place of living and intention to visit. Intention to visit and the first two constructs in the model are latent and therefore measured with reflective indicators. Moreover there are two interfaces, the 2D with narration and the 3D with narration, prior visits and place of living which are formative. Prior visits, place of living and interface can be labeled factors and not constructs.

Table 1 List of constructs and factors, means and SD

	Mean	Std. deviation
Intention to visit Las Vegas		
* Likely	5.33	1.80
* Probably	5.35	1.62
* Certain	5.25	1.62
* definitely	5.32	1.59
Prior visits		
* Has not been to Las Vegas (56 respondents) Has been to Las Vegas before (13 respondents)	1.19	0.39
<u>Living in Europe or USA</u>		
Living in the US (47 respondents), living in the Netherlands (56 respondents)	1.32	0.47
<u>Feeling of being there, 7 point Likert scale</u>		
I felt as though I was physically present in Las Vegas	3.75	1.56
I felt I was actually there in the streets of the city	3.93	1.57
When watching I thought “I could go to the building, open the door and walk through the door”	3.80	1.50
<u>Sense of place, 5 point Likert scale</u>		
I felt I was in the city at least a few times while looking at the screen. And I was thinking about the people in the city and what the city means	2.45	1.05
I felt I was in the city at least a few times while looking at the screen. And I was thinking about what I could do in the city.	3.23	1.11
I like to see the city to and to take advantage of some of the possibilities the city has to offer	3.78	0.86

Construct reliability was assessed by using composite reliability (internal consistency). All the construct reliabilities exceeded Nunnally's (1978) suggested .7 benchmark, see table 2. In addition there are three formative, single item constructs; has been to Las Vegas before, living in Europe or US, and used the interface 2D or 3D.

Table 2 Internal consistency

	AVE	Composite Reliability	R Square	Cronbachs Alpha	Communality	Redundancy
Has been to Las Vegas before	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000	1,0000	0,0000
Intention to visit Las Vegas	0,8562	0,9597	0,4289	0,9439	0,8562	0,0521
Interface	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000	1,0000	0,0000
Living in Europe or US	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000	1,0000	0,0000
Sense of place	0,5814	0,8058	0,4049	0,6448	0,5814	0,2359
Telepresence	0,7624	0,9056	0,0944	0,8431	0,7624	0,0718

Convergent validity was examined using the average variance extracted (AVE) and all constructs were above the benchmark of .5 suggested by Fornell and Larcker's (1981), see table 2. Moreover, the discriminate validity was acceptable because the indicators loaded higher (cross loadings) for its respective latent variables than for other latent variables, see table 3.

Table 3 The crossloadings of the items.

	Has been to Las Vegas	Intention to visit Las Vegas	Interface 2D or 3D	Living in the US or Europe	Sense of place	Feeling of Being There (telepresence)
Living in Europe or US	0,0911	0,5140	-0,0523	1,0000	0,3366	0,2663
FeelingofBeingThereA	0,0528	0,4434	0,2930	0,3135	0,6413	**0,9140**
FeelingofBeingThereB	0,0407	0,3600	0,2744	0,2199	0,5082	**0,8934**
FeelingofBeingThereC	0,0940	0,4082	0,2338	0,1482	0,5017	**0,8084**
Intention_Likely	0,2414	**0,9002**	-0,0593	0,4746	0,3948	0,4308
Intention_Probably	0,2420	**0,9306**	-0,0393	0,4196	0,4192	0,4006
Intention_certain	0,2025	**0,9543**	-0,0292	0,5490	0,4192	0,4249
Intention_definitely	0,2541	**0,9151**	-0,0029	0,4520	0,4180	0,4624
Interface 2D or 3D	-0,0440	-0,0351	**1,0000**	-0,0523	0,2718	0,3073
Has been to Las Vegas	**1,0000**	0,2534	-0,0029	0,0911	0,0409	0,0708

SenseofPlace1	0,1234	0,5127	0,1574	0,1911	**0,8152**	0,5107
SenseofPlace2	-0,0340	0,2601	0,1806	0,3968	**0,7745**	0,4740
SenseofPlace3	-0,0299	0,1873	0,3134	0,2052	**0,6928**	0,4729

In table 4 the paths between the constructs are presented. The bootstrapping technique was used to test the significant levels of the path. With the exceptions of the path from "Sense of place" to "Intention to visit Las Vegas", all paths are significant.

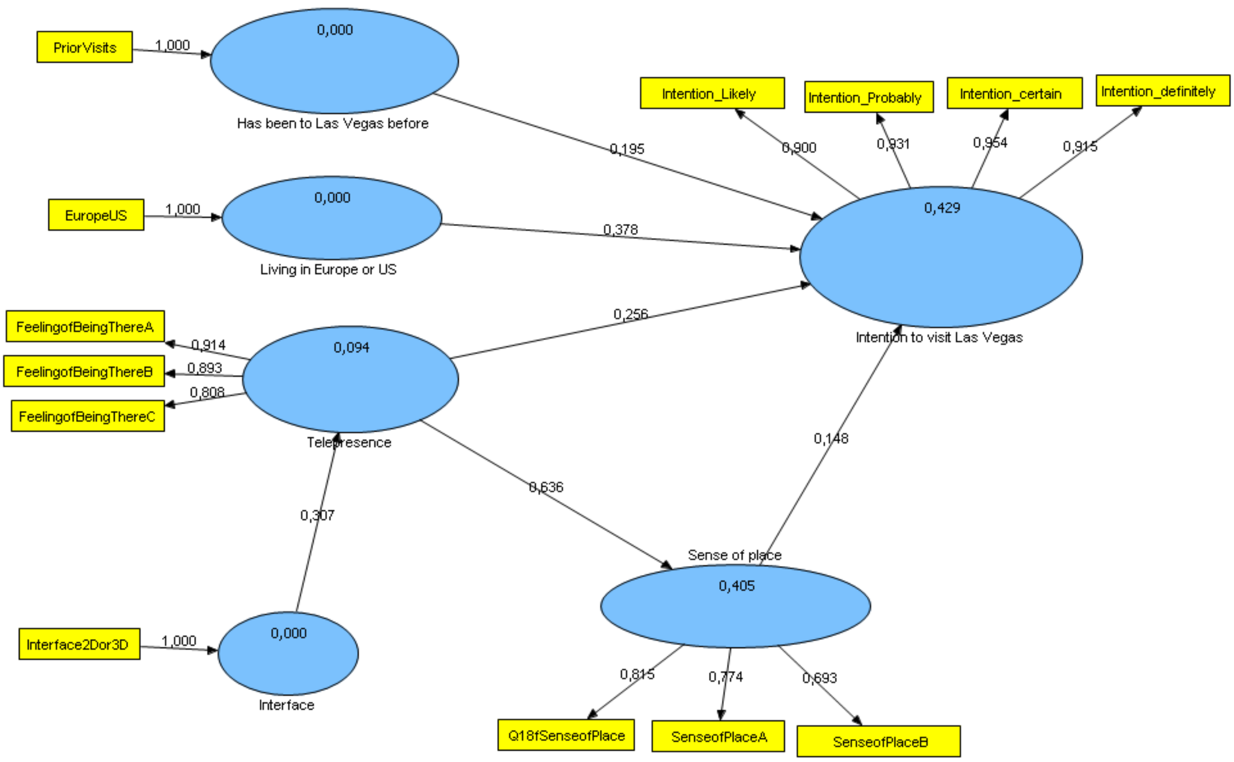
Table 4 The loadings (paths) of PLS estimation for the model and the significance levels of regression coefficients (observed t-value) by bootstrapping

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	T Statistics (**bold** = **significant**
Has been to Las Vegas before -> Intention to visit Las Vegas	0,1948	0,2028	0,0590	0,0590	**3,3034**
Interface -> Intention to visit Las Vegas	0,1077	0,1057	0,0398	0,0398	**2,7016**
Interface -> Sense of place	0,1955	0,1991	0,0598	0,0598	**3,2699**
Interface -> Telepresence	0,3073	0,3090	0,0910	0,0910	**3,3763**
Living in Europe or US -> Intention to visit Las Vegas	0,3783	0,3798	0,0747	0,0747	**5,0621**
Sense of place -> Intention to visit Las Vegas	0,1477	0,1401	0,1142	0,1142	1,2934
Telepresence -> Intention to visit Las Vegas	0,3503	0,3430	0,0807	0,0807	**4,3400**
Telepresence -> Sense of place	0,6363	0,6446	0,0488	0,0488	**13,0284**

The structural model

The structural model contains the paths between the constructs, An examination of the structural model using Smart PLS indicates that the model explains approximately 43 percent of the variability in intention to visit Las Vegas there (R^2 =0.43), see figure 2. The 33-67 R^2 range can be labeled as a moderate level (Chin, 1998). There seems to be a rather strong association with place of living and intention to visit the destination. Also, telepresence and prior visits seem to be associated with intention to visit Las Vegas. There is a significant path from telepresence to sense of place, but not from sense of place to intention to visit.

Figure 2 The structural model.



The model indicates that the constructs and factors seem to have an effect on intention to visit the destination.

Discussion

The first hypothesis H1 stated that having visited Las Vegas before will significantly influence the intention to visit the destination. This hypothesis was supported in this study and the finding is in accordance with a number of other studies. The second hypothesis H2 stated individuals living in the USA will have a significantly higher intention to visit Las Vegas than individuals living in Europe. This hypothesis was also supported based on the data. It was a significantly higher intention to visit Las Vegas among the Americans vs. the European respondents. The third hypothesis stated that high telepresence will have a significantly stronger effect on intention to visit than low telepresence. Also H3 was supported. The path between interface and telepresence is positive and significant. The last hypothesis, H4 stated that sense of place affects the intention to visit a destination. The analysis shows that the path was not significant and the hypothesis was not supported.

The finding, the fact that the first three hypotheses were supported is in accordance with the literature. However, the new factor sense of place was not associated with intention to visit. According to Gustafson (2001) sense of place is product of the interaction between self, environment and other the people. Theoretically, it is a rich concept and not necessarily easy to operationalise. Sense of place emphasizes what the place means to the residents living there, and also what the place means to the visitor and what he or she would like to do. Las Vegas is city with many casinos. It is possible that the image of this city is very much linked to this aspect. Las Vegas might be somewhat atypical as a city destination and as such not a first choice for a study on sense of place.

Conclusion

For tourism marketing, new technology represents opportunities and challenges. There are many marketing tools and information channels available for a destination, but the “how to” is not an easy question. Most destinations have segments that they want to target. New media, internet and mobile technology is getting more and more popular among travelers. The present study demonstrates that a virtual environment, a 3D city model based on gaming technology can be used for a tourism marketing purpose. The virtual environment (VE) can create a feeling of being there i. e. in the city of Las Vegas and it is a factor that seems to contribute to the intention to visit the city. For the industry it is important to make informed decisions as opposed to jump on the band-wagon. The gaming technology can be used for non-gaming purposes. Simulators and learning tools are well known examples. The 3D virtual environment may also afford the tourism industry to lever the popularity of this new engaging technology. However, more research is warranted in this area. What is it that makes it engaging in a non-gaming context? The visual, the graphics is good, but how is the destination to be presented? Is it necessary to add a story, a narrative or is good graphics enough?

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Appendix 1 Las Vegas in PGR4

Sport Events

INTELLIGENT LOCAL-BASED INFORMATION THE EURO2008™ EXPERIENCE FROM INNSBRUCK

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Abstract

Exemplarily for the EURO2008^{TM} host city of Innsbruck (Tyrol), the paper presents a newly developed system for providing intelligent local-based information (ILBI)* to support visitor management during mega sport events. An active 868-869 MHz radio frequency identification (RFID) system allows for real-time localization and a rule engine matches user location and preferences, weather conditions, time and other parameters before customized SMS are sent (i.e. pushed) to event visitors. Triggered by individual movement patterns of almost 420 event visitors nearly 4,000 SMS were sent during the EURO2008^{TM}. Additionally, over 12,000 tracking data were generated, thereby allowing the analysis of interesting movement patterns of event visitors. Finally, most frequently triggered, thus, most relevant event information and corresponding cross-selling potentials are identified.

Keywords: Sports mega event, EURO2008TM, local-based information, push-service, active RFID

Introduction

The European Football Championship offers a unique opportunity to prototypically implement and evaluate innovative applications to support visitor management (Getz 2003, Chalip & McGuirty 2004, Bowdin et al. 2006, Berridge 2007). Especially the basic parameters at the scenes of the tournament make it possible to explore and evaluate new city marketing and tourist planning tools (Calsen et al. 2001; Shone & Parry 2004; Supovitz & Goldblatt 2004, Masterman & Wood 2006, Chalip & Costa 2006, Getz 2007). The European Union encourages innovative inter-regional initiatives in tourism and cultural awareness. Thus, the EURO2008^{TM} host city Innsbruck (Austria), its impressive and close sporting and event sites, its cultural assets plus the innovative regional climate made it possible to set up an EU funded research project aiming at implementing a system to provide intelligent local-based information (ILBI). The aims are, firstly, to support visitor management at mega sport events through intelligently provided local-based information (Getz & Fairley 2004). The second aim is to design an adequate technological architecture to prototypically implement this information system during the EURO2008^{TM} at the host city of Innsbruck. Finally, usage patterns of various visitor groups (both event visitors and guests at the destination) using this information system via their own mobile device (smart phone, PDA) are tracked and analysed.

The event scene during the EURO2008^{TM} provided the ideal setting because of cooperating stakeholders and an already existing technological infrastructure, the official guide of the host city, www.innsbruck-mobile.at (Rasinger 2009 et al.). This web-based application provides traffic and event-related information via pull and push (SMS) services, respectively (Höpken et al. 2006). The supplemental ILBI approach, however, is based on four pillars. Firstly, tourists and residents were equally targeted by avoiding any potential communication barriers (device independency) and communication costs (Höpken et al. 2008). As no user interaction is required a SMS-based push service was set up. Thus, secondly, three local-based information categories were provided by more than 1,150 SMS, namely event information (Fan Camp, Fan Area, Arena and local suppliers), city/culture-related information as well as coupons (shops and restaurants). Thirdly, to ensure intelligent information push, a rule engine was developed to match user location and preferences, weather conditions, time and other information parameters (Beer et al. 2007). Almost 100 previously defined parameters trigger the selection of SMS to be sent to event visitors. Fourthly, after evaluating existing positioning techniques, considering legal requirements and acceptance studies an active 868-

869 MHz radio frequency identification (RFID) system comprising 26 passive antennas located at strategically relevant points within the host city of Innsbruck was chosen (Kinoshita et al. 2005, Krotov & Junglas 2008). Handy and stylish active RFID tags distributed to event visitors allowed for real-time localization and tracking (Lionel et al. 2004, Haid 2007). Retrospectively, nearly 4,000 local-based information SMS were sent during the EURO2008^{TM} triggered by individual movement patterns of almost 420 visitors acting as test users. Additionally, over 12,000 tracking data were generated. This allows for segment-based analyses of event visitors' mobility and information behaviour within the host city of Innsbruck. More importantly, most frequently triggered, thus, most relevant event information can precisely be identified (Chalip & Leyns 2002).

The paper is structured as follows: By focussing on the event setting, section two provides background information about the sports mega event EURO2008^{TM}. Subsequently, the official information infrastructure offering mobile services to tourists, www.innsbruck-mobile.at, is presented (Rasinger et al. 2009). Section three introduces the supplemental ILBI approach by highlighting the SMS-based push service, the various information categories targeting the event visitors via their own mobile device, the rule engine as well as the RFID infrastructure. Result section four shows, first of all, descriptive findings related to the period during and after the mega event. Pushed location-based SMS belonging to various information categories, tracking data and user types (defined by demographics and preference profiles) are discussed. Secondly, the segment-based mobility and information behaviour of user-groups is sketched on the base of tracking patterns and most frequently required event information. Finally, hints on cross selling potentials are deduced by analysing the types of coupons received by event visitors over time and space. The conclusion section discusses study limits and future research veins.

Event setting

EURO2008^{TM}

The European Football Championship EURO2008^{TM} is the world's third biggest sports event. During the 7th and 29th of June 2008 at least 155 millions television viewers followed each of the 31 matches live. The event organizer, the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), generated total revenues amounting at € 1.3 billions (€ 800 millions through media licences, € 280 millions through commercial licences, € 90 millions through tickets, and € 130 millions through corporate hospitality, UEFA 2008). Next to Vienna, Salzburg and Klagenfurt (AUT) as well as Geneva, Basel, Zürich and Bern (CH), Innsbruck was the venue for three matches of the international football tournament (at 10th, 14th and 18th of June 2008). The Austrian (Tyrolean) host city counts about 100,000 citizens and was officially labelled as the 'European Sports City 2008' (Europäische Stadt des Sports 2008). The aim was to celebrate a folk festival through offering a varied event programme to national and international football fans but also to visitors and citizens not primarily attracted by football and the related mega event. In particularly, locals were strongly integrated in the event planning processes (Chalip & Leyns, 2002). First of all, the entertainment programme was specifically designed to suite differing tastes of all age groups. Secondly, already six months before the official start of the sports event, a total of 35,000 locals (abutters of fan-areas, students, seniors, etc.) have been thoroughly informed about planned measures and activities at the host city during the EURO2008^{TM} (Chalip & McGuirty, 2004). For instance, the stadium was made accessible through freely guided tours and the various public services, such as the volunteers' support, traffic services, emergency medical services, fire brigade, police, and federal armed forces, etc. were broadly presented through media and public presentations (Getz & Fairley 2004). As a consequence, during the event, neither riots nor traffic congestions were observed. Rather, the more than 400 accredited media representatives could send unique images of a highly festive, happy and peaceful soccer tournament around the whole of the globe (Supovitz & Goldblatt 2004; Masterman & Wood 2006). In figures, during EURO2008^{TM} the host city of Innsbruck attracted 440,000 international visitors and the advertising board around the playing field showed the city's name on TV screen more than 7 hours. This corresponds to an advertising equivalent of € 90 millions (UEFA 2008).

Mobile guide Innsbruck-mobile.at

Ecommerce experts and market observers predict that mobile services accessed via portable devices (PDA, Smartphone) will be the next stage in the Internet boom (Liang & Wei 2004, Pernici 2006). Mobile services in tourism are especially suitable for the on-site phase where cross-selling potentials and active customer relationship management may be exploited (Rasinger et al. 2007; 2009). Tourists have access to the whole product portfolio of a destination and may interact with other user groups at any time and any place. In addition, destination suppliers achieve a powerful communication and distribution channel directed to tourists' mobile handsets, thereby gaining knowledge about tourists' information, interaction and mobility behaviour at the destination.

The architectural framework on which Innsbruck.mobile is build up is based on mobile web-technologies (i.e. XHTML-MP). The technology used to dynamically adapt the application to different devices is XML-XSLT (Höpken et al. 2006, 2008). Content data is generated in a device-independent XML-format (i.e. iXML) whereas XSL style sheets take care of adapting content to various device types (i.e. the open source project WURFL serves as basis for automatically detecting the characteristics of the accessing device; www.wurfl.sourceforge.net). Furthermore, in order to minimize the amount of transferred data images are resized on the server (on-the-fly image conversion). The O/R Mapper HIBERNATE (www.hibernate.org) allows easy access to databases, thereby reducing time of import and synchronization jobs. Finally, the recommendation functionality applies a recommendation strategy combining user preferences (i.e. content-based or social filtering) with knowledge or utility based preferences.

The mobile guide Innsbruck.mobile supports tourists during stay by providing information on various destination services, such as 'Events', 'Accommodations', 'Gastronomy', 'Sights', and 'Weather'. Both, a simple or an extended search service allow for actively query information. Furthermore, in order to receive personalized and context-sensitive information, the user can sign up for a push service which actively provides him/her with SMS messages relevant to the current situation. Recommendation dialogs support information filtering. Finally, users may both give feedback to services, read feedback of other users or use a location based blogging tool. In order to optimally support the specific requirements of the EURO2008^{TM}, however, additional service features have been implemented: The 'Daily Programme' chronologically lists events exclusively offered in the course of the EURO2008^{TM}. A 'Match Schedule' provides match dates, actual team scores as well as general access information to reach the stadium and public viewings. Furthermore, a 'SMS service' actively informs about eventual traffic jams and the actual score immediately after each match. Finally, a pull-based 'traffic information service' offers both, traffic notifications in real-time and an interactive route planner for public busses ('Bus-station Live') and trains. In the course of the EURO2008^{TM} the number of distinct visits on the mobile guide stood at almost 3,200 and about 33,268 pages have been opened. The far most often opened services have been the 'traffic information service' with 14,931 hits (30.39%), followed by the ‘Daily Programme’ with 6,973 hits (14.19%) and the ‘Event Service’ with corresponding ‘city maps’ (4,493 hits) and search functions (1,278 hits), respectively.

ILBI methodology

SMS-based push service

Computer scientists describe the seamless integration of information and physical services as well as the flexible configuration of physical and informational parts as the main challenges for the tourism industry (Ricci & Werthner, 2001). In this way, intelligent information services reduce both the information retrieval effort and information overload experienced by users (Höpken et al. 2006). Accordingly, Cheverst et al. (2002) and Beer et al. (2007) propose a push-based mobile information service where tourists are informed about events or places in their domain of interest based on their location, profile and the actual time. Thus, for the ILBI project at hand, the below sketched PUSH service integrated in the Innsbruck.mobile application was adopted: The PUSH service sends information via SMS to final users and informs about relevant events (e.g. traffic jams), tourism offers (e.g. events) or general circumstances (e.g. weather forecast). Concerning the relevance of information the push service takes into account the user profile (characteristics, preferences and usage history), the current context (time, location and circumstances) as well as the travel itinerary (already selected tourism services or activities). In order to select the right information and the right sending time the push service combines constraint-based reasoning and content-based or social filtering techniques (Ricci & Werthner, 2001). Rules define which information is of relevance in which context and which tourism services are combinable with an existing travel itinerary. Message-sending is triggered by any contextual parameter captured by the database (e.g. weather conditions). Relevant information or tourism services are then filtered by making use of the recommendation techniques (e.g. social filtering). The push service is implemented based on a rule mechanism (Beer et al. 2007). More precisely, rules are defined independently of the application code, determining whether a message is sent to a user and which information or tourism services are of relevance. Finally, a user front-end enables a comfortable and flexible definition of rules where each message type is defined by an E-C-A rule implying that the rule editor provides wizards for each rule element (i.e. event, condition, action).

ILBI information categories

The central benefit for the ILBI user is generated through the adequate content provided by the locaton based information system. The ILBI system was launched with over 1,000 different event-, culture-, restaurant-, and shopping-related SMS supporting three languages, German, English and Italian. Three main information categories are classified as follows:

a) Historical and cultural information

Over 650 different SMS with historical and cultural content are provided by the information system. More than 50% of the content was generated manually by the ILBI project team on basis of the qualitatively valuable source “The Brenner-Archives”, a research institute at the University of Innsbruck and at the same time the Tyrolean Literary Archives. Other sources were diverse literature, historical books on Innsbruck, local museums and personal interviews with locals. Historical and cultural information SMS have the specific characteristic that they do not have an expiration date. These information SMS are therefore still integrated in the ILBI system.

b) Event related information

Contrary to the historical and cultural information the event related information SMS have a predefined validity period with an explicit end. Over 400 SMS were manually generated on the basis of the event organizer. Typically, the organizers were the EURO2008™ host city Innsbruck, local institutions who provide once-only events, like concerts or other cultural events, gastronomy with special events and museums. The event related information SMS from 2008 are mostly, except for very few museum SMS, not active anymore, but new information SMS are generated on a weekly basis.

c) Coupons

The third category of information SMS are coupon templates with individual codes and a standard text. Only coupons with a benefit to the user, like a price reduction on products or services or a free gift, are sent out by the ILBI system. Around 180 different coupon SMS are provided by nearly 100 content partners. Each coupon can be sent out 100 times without any costs for the content providers, for example local industry, restaurants, bars, shopping centres and event organizers. After 100 SMS the content provider has to pay a certain advertising fee. Similar to event related information SMS, coupons are only valid for a certain period of time. By contrast, however, coupons comprise an individual content, the code, and are limited by a maximum number of potential emissions. Each content provider of coupons gets an individual list of the possible codes. This secures that every coupon is only used once.

ILBI RFID infrastructure

Considering legal requirements and acceptance studies (Krotov & Junglas 2008; Kinoshita et al. 2005) the university decided to use an autonomous and easy to handle hardware structure based on especially handy and newly developed active RFID tags. The principal role of this novel information system is to provide useful information in a user-friendly approach using a highly innovative transmission technology with real-time location accuracy. Users are provided with a small active RFID tag, issued free of charge at various distribution points allowing non-contact, non-line-of-sight and real-time location and tracking within a radius of up to 200 meters.

Figure 1: RFID readers or info access points

As soon as the signal emitted by the active RFID tag is captured by a reader installed at one of the so-called 26 innfo access points on site, information, such as sightseeing or event tips, is generated on basis of specified parameters and is actively sent to the user's cell-phone via SMS within short notice and free of charge. Each user can easily create and maintain the detailed personal profile online in order to then receive the most suitable information on-site. Participating users can freely decide at any time if they want to be tracked by the RFID system or not as an ON/OFF button is integrated in the tag for easy and individual activation and deactivation. There is no personal data encoded on the tag (Peters et al. 2009).

In detail ILBI works with an active UHF RFID system (868-869 MHz) consisting of active RFID tags and passive RFID readers. The active RFID tags run by standard three volt button cells. If used 24 hours a day a maximum lifetime of nearly five months can be guaranteed. RFID readers are combined with application processors and GSM (Global System for Mobile Communication) modems are responsible for the communication logic and communication via SMS with the ILBI infrastructure (inbound and outbound server, database server, application server and rule engine) at the University of Innsbruck. All relevant engineer standards are fulfilled by the system especially regarding electromagnetic compatibility (EMC), EN 300 220 and casing protection.

ILBI rule engine logic

Instead of looking at details regarding the technical implementation the business logic is the root of the matter. The rule engine carries the processes of decision making which content should be pushed to the user via SMS. About 100 parameters are involved to select the right information for the user. These parameters can be structured as follows and have to be assigned to either the content provided, the user or in special cases to both:

a) Information candidate

Each information candidate has to be classified through various parameters. Besides a short title, a short description with a maximum of 450 characters used as the SMS content, a long description for the website and contact data, like address, telephone number, e-mail address and website, each candidate carries specific characteristics. The implemented system can handle up to three SMS per information candidate.

Following parameter categories are relevant for the rule engine logic:

Target group parameters
The main target group parameters are gender (female, male, both), role (local, tourist, both) and age (under 18, 18-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70 and older).

Location
The location of an information candidate is defined by GPS-coordinates. Through the distance to the RFID antennas each information candidate is automatically set at zero (i.e. not relevant) or from one to five (low – high relevance; integers) per antenna. Depending on the location of the antennas and the information density, the ratio of relevance to meters is changing.

Handicapped accessibility
The information candidates are rated as either accessible or not accessible for handicapped. This parameter is primarily relevant to event and coupon information. Rarely this parameter is also relevant for historical and cultural information (e.g. access to hidden situated historical buildings).

Time related parameters
Each information candidate has a validity period with a maximum ending at the 31.12.9999. The relevance can be broken down to single weekdays and be set zero (not relevant) or from one to five (low – high relevance; integers). The system additionally allows daytime relevance settings for every single half an hour period of a day with the same values (zero; one to five).

Weather related parameters
In regions with a wide spectrum of weather conditions the benefit of event and coupon information for the user seems to be dependent on the categorization of an information candidate. Therefore, the implemented system asks for temperature relevance (below -10° C, -10 to 0° C, 1° C to 10° C, 11° C to 20° C, 21° C to 30° C, 31° C to 40°C, above 40° C), for wind relevance (less than 12 km/h, 12 - 19 km/h, 20 - 28 km/h, 29 - 38 km/h, 39 - 49 km/h, 50 - 61 km/h, more than 61 km/h) and weather condition relevance (snow, thunder, foggy, rain, heavy clouds, cloudy, sunny). Each parameter can be set at zero (not adequate) or at one to five (marginally adequate – highly adequate).
Information candidates interest parameters

The following main and subcategories are available to be valued with zero (not relevant) or one to five (low relevance – high relevance; integers). A maximum of eleven weighting points can be allocated to the subcategories. Main categories are not rated.

Table 1: Information candidates interest parameters

Main Categories	Interesting Facts	Arts and Culture	Food and Drinks	Shopping	Sports	Going Out	Leisure	Specials / EURO2008™
Category 1	Sights	Expositions	Gourmet Cuisine	Fashion	Alpine Sports	Party	Fun & Games	EURO / ILBI Events
Category 2	History	Museum	Regional Cuisine	Beauty / Style	Water Sports	Jovial	Nature	EURO / ILBI Reminder
Category 3	Customs & Culture	Gallery	International Cuisine	Health and Wellness	Summer Sports	Dancing	Fauna	EURO / ILBI Service
Category 4	Regional	Theatre	Vegetarian	Specialities / Delight	Winter Sports	Folk Music	Cinema	
Category 5	Architecture	Cabaret	Snack / Fast Food	Electronics / Technology	Indoor Sports	Pop / Rock	Events	
Category 6	Art History	Literature	Cafe	Exquisite / Luxury	Outdoor Sports	Soul / Jazz	Exhibitions	
Category 7		Classical Music	Bar	Shopping Centre	Ball Games	Metal / Punk		
Category 8				Small Trade	Extreme Sports	Hip Hop / Rap / RnB		
Category 9					Fitness	Reggae / Dancehall		
Category 10						Electronic		

b) User

In general two main types of users exist. The first type is the online user who is only able to use the website functionality to get local information. This user can simulate his position and his parameters and can that way either test the functionality of the whole system without the RFID infrastructure or use the system to get online access to local historical, cultural or event information, respectively (www.innfo.at). The second type of user has broader possibilities to get the information provided by the system. By carrying an activated active RFID tag the user can get local-based information as a push service at 26 information areas in Innsbruck. If and what kind of information the user receives depends on several settings particularly on his own parameters. The following parameters are defined by the user:

Language
The user can decide between German, English and Italian as his or her preferred communication language.

Age

Mobile telephone number
Maximum number of SMS willing to receive

Each user can decide how many SMS she or he is willing to receive. The range of choice lies between one and ten SMS per day.

Handicapped accessibility
A restriction can be set by the user in respect of the willingness to get information which carries explicit handicapped accessible content.

Gender and role
A decision has to be made by the user to define the user's gender (female, male) and role (local, tourist).

User interests parameters
Following main and subcategories are available to be valued with zero (not relevant) or one to five (low relevance – high relevance; integers). Weighting points can be allocated to the subcategories with no limitation. Main categories can be rated with the effect that all subcategories of the selected main category are set with the same value. This allows a fast and easy setting of interest parameters.

Table 2: User interest parameters

Main Categories	Interesting Facts	Arts and Culture	Food and Drinks	Shopping	Sports	Going Out	Leisure	Specials / EURO2008™
Category 1	Sights	Expositions	Gourmet Cuisine	Fashion	Alpine Sports	Party	Fun & Games	EURO / ILBI Events
Category 2	History	Museum	Regional Cuisine	Beauty / Style	Water Sports	Jovial	Nature	EURO / ILBI Reminder
Category 3	Customs & Culture	Gallery	International Cuisine	Health and Wellness	Summer Sports	Dancing	Fauna	EURO / ILBI Service
Category 4	Regional	Theatre	Vegetarian	Specialities / Delight	Winter Sports	Folk Music	Cinema	
Category 5	Architecture	Cabaret	Snack / Fast Food	Electronics / Technology	Indoor Sports	Pop / Rock	Events	
Category 6	Art History	Literature	Cafe	Exquisite / Luxury	Outdoor Sports	Soul / Jazz	Exhibitions	
Category 7		Classical Music	Bar	Shopping Centre	Ball Games	Metal / Punk		
Category 8				Small Trade	Extreme Sports	Hip Hop / Rap / RnB		
Category 9					Fitness	Reggae / Dancehall		
Category 10						Electronic		

c) Rule engine logic

The key to secure high quality messages for the user typically depends on the functionality of the implemented rule engine. The logic behind that rule engine accomplishes the matching of the user and the information under consideration of all mentioned parameters. More precisely a matching point minimum has to be reached to trigger the push service. Additional rule engine parameters and the order of identifying the most relevant information are explained below.

Additional rule engine parameters
Without going to deep into the logics of the rule engine additional parameters have to be set wise to get reasonable results and valuable information for the users.

Table 3: Settings of rule engine parameters

Code	Main and sub-parameters	Min. weighting / value	Max. weighting / value	Effected code, calculation or data
1	Weather weighting	0%	100%	(1a + 1b + 1c) / (weighting 1a + weighting 1b + weighting 1c)
1a	Weather status weighting	0%	100%	Weighting * candidate settings weather status
1b	Temperature weighting	0%	100%	Weighting * candidate settings temperature
1c	Wind weighting	0%	100%	Weighting * candidate settings wind
2	Time weighting	0%	100%	Weighting * candidate settings (weekday + time) / 2
3	Location weighting	0%	100%	Weighting * candidate settings location
4	Category weighting	0%	100%	Weighting * candidate settings (user interests * information interest)
5	Minimum points to trigger information	0	X	If not reached candidate will not be sent
6	Message time lock	0 minutes	X minutes	Lock in minutes after last sent message
7	Advertising ratio (coupons)	-	-	Defined for each role
7a	Locals	0%	100%	Maximum coupons per day
7b	Tourists	0%	100%	Maximum coupons per day
8	Additional knock out settings	-	-	-
8a	Regarding handicapped accessibility	True	False	Matching user and candidate
8b	Regarding weather	True	False	Matching weather and candidate
8c	Regarding daytime	True	False	Matching daytime and candidate
8d	Regarding weekday	True	False	Matching daytime and candidate
8e	Regarding age	True	False	Matching user and candidate
9	Randomizing range	0	X	Highest rated candidate – Randomizing range = basis to find randomized candidate for user
10	Raising minimum points to trigger information	-	-	-

10a	**Additional points after last information sent**	**0**	**X**	**5 + 10a**
10b	**Reducing factor**	**0**	**X**	**(5 + 10a) – ((Maximum number of SMS willing to receive / 24 hours) * ((10a * hours since last sent information) / 10b))**
11	**Reducing minimum points to trigger information**	-	-	-
11a	**Minimum set user parameter points**	**0**	**X**	**Triggers 11b if set user parameter points < 11a**
11b	**Reducing factor for minimum points to trigger information**	**0**	**X**	**5 – ((11a - set user parameter points) * 11b)**

Order of identifying the most valuable information candidate

The rule engine follows the parameters set in the user profile, the information candidates and the rule engine parameters. A special order is executed to generate the push message.

Evaluating the user:
System checks if the identified user has already reached the daily SMS limit.
If SMS limit is not reached yet the evaluation goes on.
System checks if a message time lock applies.
If no message lock is activated evaluation goes on.
System checks if advertizing ratio is reached on a daily basis.
If the ratio is not reached the evaluation goes on.

Evaluating the information candidates:
System checks information candidates for both validity (date) and location relevance (minimum value is one)
All information candidates fulfilling these two criteria are carried over to the information candidate knock out check.
System lists all previously sent information candidates to the user
This is an additional information for simulation testing.

Evaluating the information candidates knock out:
System checks information candidates for knock out criteria
If information was already sent the candidate is knocked out.
If information is not valid at the actual weekday the candidate is knocked out.
If information is not valid at the actual daytime the candidate is knocked out.
If information is not valid under the actual wind conditions the candidate is knocked out.
If information is not valid under the actual weather status conditions the candidate is knocked out.
If information is not valid under the actual temperature conditions the candidate is knocked out.
If information is not valid for the user’s age the candidate is knocked out.
If information is not valid for the user’s gender the candidate is knocked out.
If information is not valid for the user’s role the candidate is knocked out.
If information is not valid for the user’s handicap-accessibility settings the candidate is knocked out.

Calculating the matching points for the remaining information candidates.
Expression by using the codes of table 3:
(1+2+3+4) / (weighting 1+weighting 2+weighting 3+weighting 4)
Sorting the information candidates by their matching points.

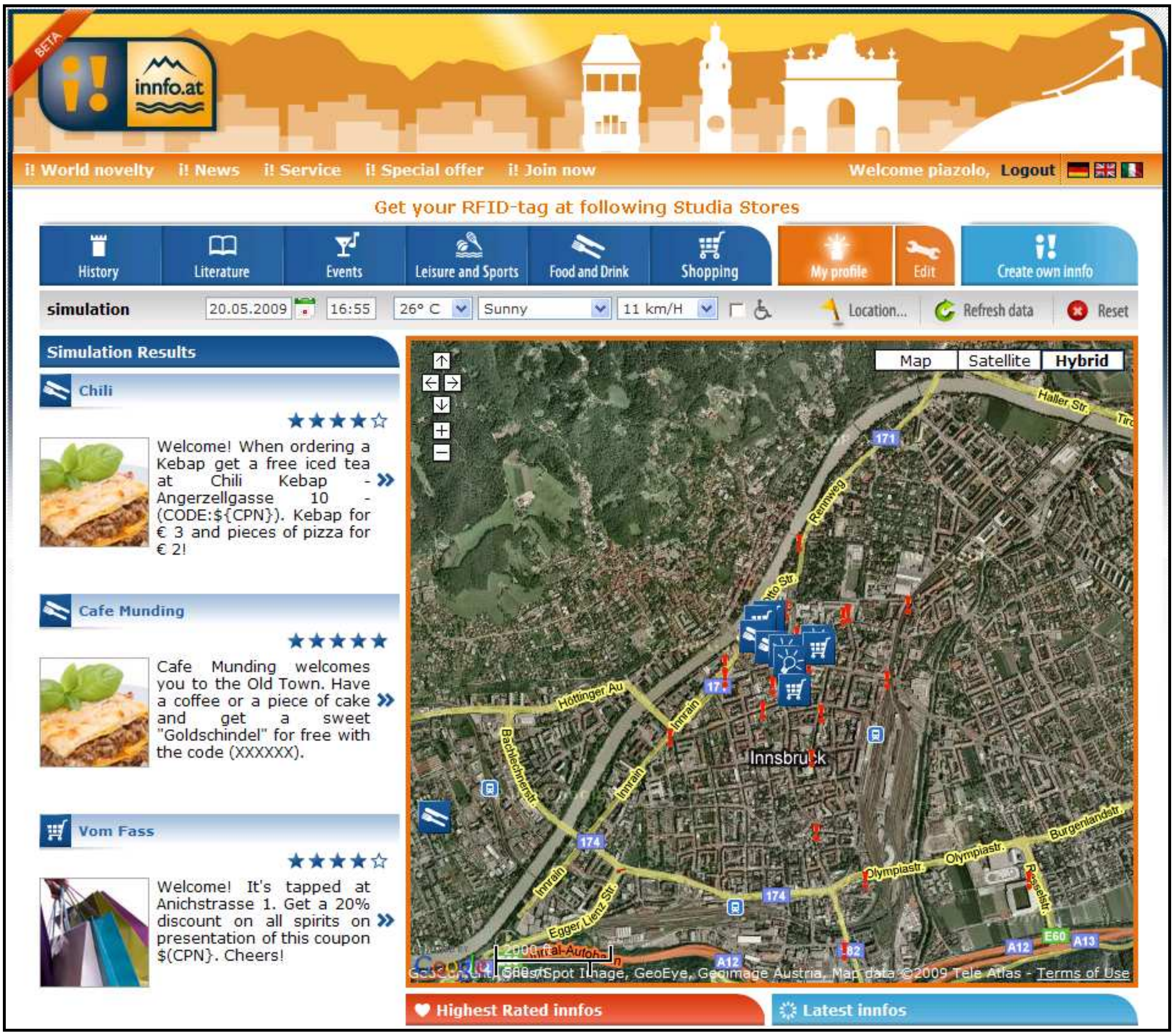
Calculating the matching point limit by the user and rule engine parameters.

Matching the user with the relevant information candidate
Shuffling the information candidates within the matching point range. That is the effect of the randomizing range value if more than one candidate is within the set range. If there are two or more candidates with the same amount of matching points the random generator decides which message will be sent to the user.
Sorting the information candidates by their matching points.
This is again only additional information for simulation testing.

After various tests carried out before the EURO2008™ the rule engine parameters have not been changed during the first year of the system usage. In June 2009 statistical analysis and customer surveys will deliver the basis to optimize the rule engine settings.

The functionality of the system including the simulation of the rule engine can be tested individually on the project website www.innfo.at.

Figure 2: The project website of innfo.at showing the simulation capability



Empirical results

The empirical results show the usage of the system and first consolidated findings. After a full year in operation the intelligent local-based information system will be analysed intensively. Meanwhile following results can already be presented for the period from the 7th of June 2008 until the 31st of December 2008.

Descriptive results

The descriptive results give a general overview on the master data, tracking data and information sent to the users.

User

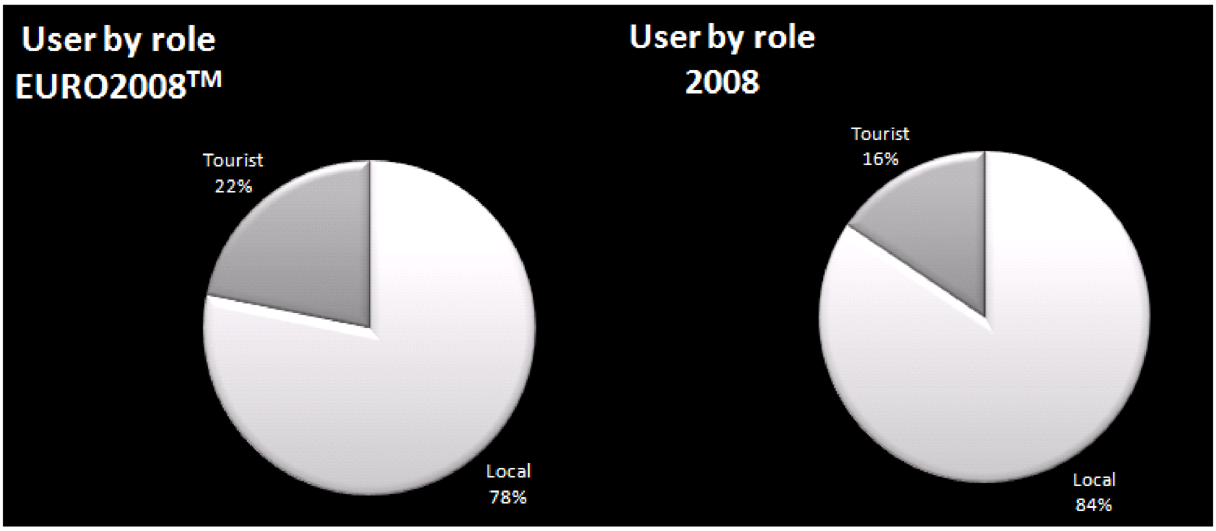
Until the 31st of December 2008 exactly 802 users were classified as active in the system. In this case active means self registered or registered by the diverse distribution points, thus, linked via an active RFID tag. During the EURO2008^{TM}, 417 users were active in Innsbruck.

Different user categories have been generated to classify and group users for future evaluations.

- Role distribution

The users can be separated in two major roles, locals and tourists. More precisely, 326 locals and 91 tourists used the system during the first main event after ILBI was opened for public use. Of course, after the event the role distribution changed in favour of the role local.

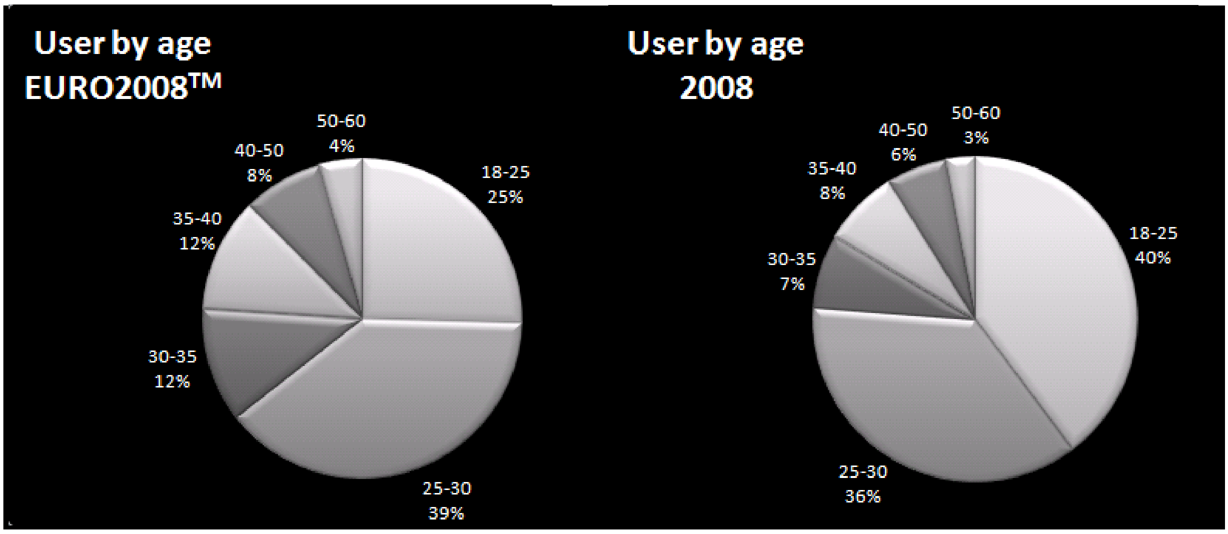
Figure 3: User by role



- Age distribution

Parallel to the role distribution an interesting descriptive result is the distribution of age among the users. None of the users during and after the sport event in 2008 were older than 60 or younger than 18 years old although the system is allowing as young as 14 year olds to participate. The distribution during the EURO2008™ was more uniformly compared to the seven month period of first usage. During the football event more than one third of the users were older than 30 years. Looking at the whole period in 2008, less than one quarter of participants belonged to that group. Thus, user diversity during the mega event was higher.

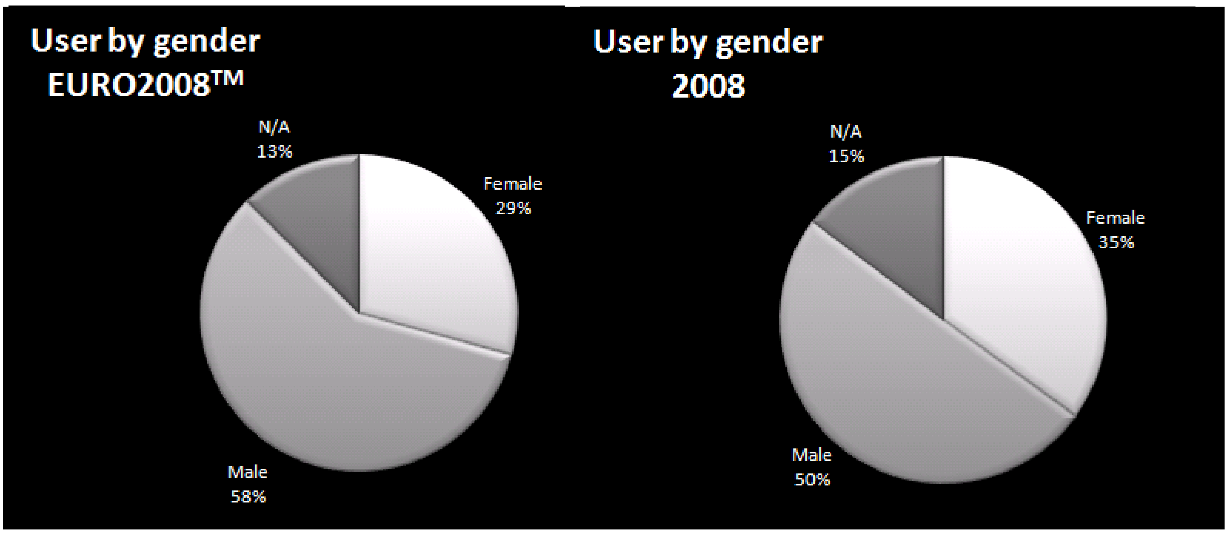
Figure 4: User by age



- Gender distribution

A further reasonable categorisation is the gender classification. During the EURO2008™ less than one third of users were females. If looking at the whole period the information system was active in 2008, female users' share slightly rose above 35%. This might be an indication of the generally distribution of football interests by genders. Future evaluations could give a clearer answer to that hypothesis.

Figure 5: User by age



Tracking data

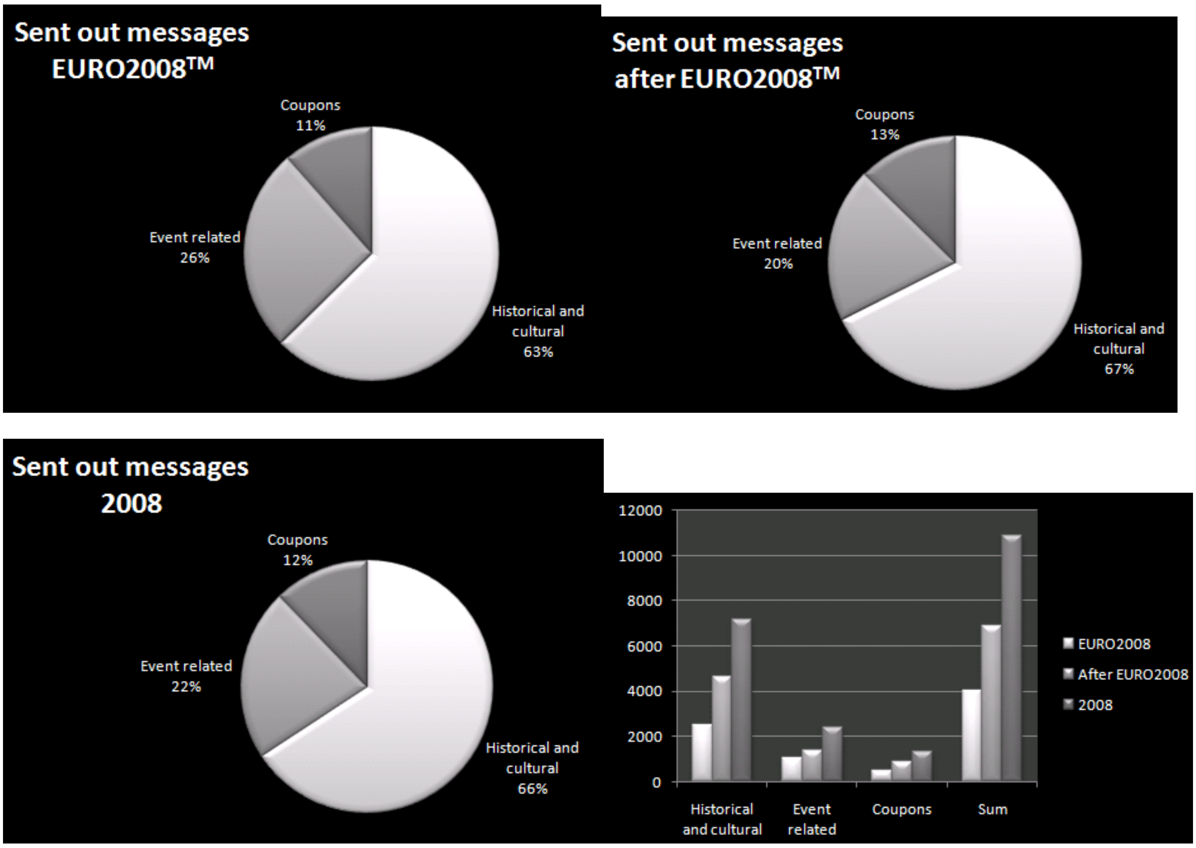
The tracking data is the basis to identify movement patterns. The RFID infrastructure can provide important information on how user groups (i.e. female, male, locals, tourists and the identified age groups) move through the host city of Innsbruck. The collected data is analysed anonymously. During the mega event EURO2008^{TM} 12,084 valid tracking data was generated via SMS. After the first application period additional 22,787 valid tracking data was collected. All together 34,871 valid data sets can be used to analyse movement patterns in 2008. The data includes information on entering an information area and leaving an information area (RFID antenna) with a time waver of 5 minutes. The time waver secures that the registered RFID tag left the information area for sure. The tracking data carrying incoming information is a potential activator of the push service depending on the evaluation the rule engine executes.

Sent out messages ("innfos")

As mentioned in section 4.1.2., entering an information area with an active RFID tag triggers an inbound SMS and initiates the rule engine. Depending on the information candidate parameters, the user parameters and the rule engine parameters the push service is triggered and the identified most valuable information is sent out to the user. During the football event exact 6,066 times the rules engine was provided with localisation data. As a result 3,993 messages were sent via SMS during the EURO2008^{TM}. The information sent out is classified by the three information categories, namely historical and cultural information (2,499), event related information (1,038) and coupons (456). After the EURO2008^{TM} additional 6,869 messages were pushed to the ILBI users. The proportion of event related information sent out noticeable decreased after the mega event. Although general user activity slowed down, still 4643 historical and cultural information, 1,355 event-related information and 871 coupons were sent out. That sums up to a total of 10,862 user unique messages created and actively pushed by the ILBI system in 2008. Worth mentioning is also the activity change through the two main periods. During the mega event around 180 messages a day were triggered. After the mega event the daily average fell to 48 messages a day.

In 2008 a totality of 17,983 incoming localizing information was registered by the ILBI system. Over 60% of these data sets resulted in a positive evaluation through the rule engine. 7,121 times the rule engine logic prevented an automatic outbound of messages because not all rule engine parameters were fulfilled. The analysed data also shows clear differences between the two major periods, during (65.83%) and after the event (57.64%). Typically an explanation can be found in the set parameters of the rule engine (i.e. knock out factors). Also relevant is the fact that the more messages a user has already received less potential future candidates are available for a defined and not changed user profile.

Figure 6: Messages sent



Role-based mobility behaviour

In order to indentify the major walking routes through the host city of Innsbruck in dependency of the user role, tracking data is analysed. First of all, a closer look at general data where users were located during and after the EURO2008™ is given. At this point it is inconsiderable if, in consequence of incoming information, an outbound message was triggered. The relevant and only the fully functional RFID antennas were considered. Until December 31st 2008 17,983 data sets with incoming information were collected at selected locations.

Figure 5 shows the location-based RFID infrastructure in Innsbruck and following table the distribution of the valid incoming location information.

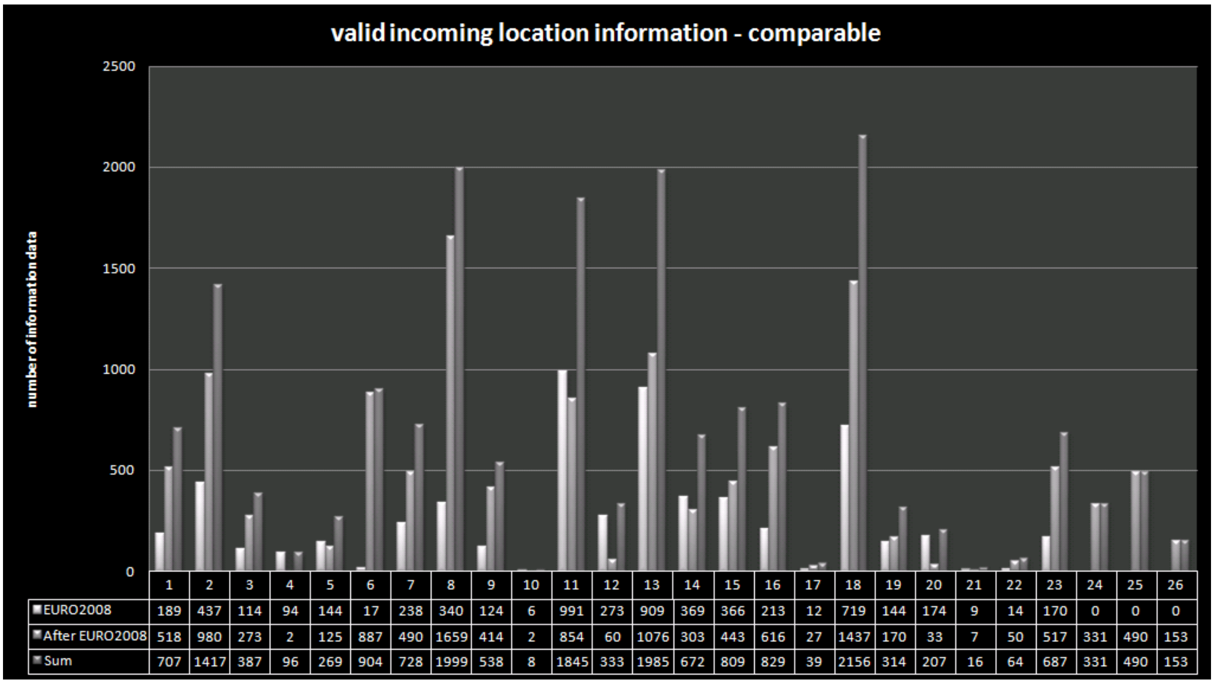
Table 4: Valid incoming location information

	RFID antenna - location	EURO2008TM	After EURO2008TM	Sum
1	Altes Landhaus	189	518	707
2	Altstadt	437	980	1417
3	Basilika Wilten	114	273	387
4	Bergiselstadion (until October 2009)	94	2	96
5	Boznerplatz	144	125	269
6	Burggraben	17	887	904

7	**Busterminal**	**238**	**490**	**728**
8	**Franziskanerplatz**	**340**	**1659**	**1999**
9	**Herrengasse**	**124**	**414**	**538**
10	**Hungerburgbahn Bergstation**	**6**	**2**	**8**
11	**University Campus**	**991**	**854**	**1845**
12	**Ing.-Etzelstrasse**	**273**	**60**	**333**
13	**Innbrücke**	**909**	**1076**	**1985**
14	**Kapuzinergasse**	**369**	**303**	**672**
15	**Maria-Theresienstrasse**	**366**	**443**	**809**
16	**Museumstrasse**	**213**	**616**	**829**
17	**Olympiabruecke**	**12**	**27**	**39**
18	**Rennplatz**	**719**	**1437**	**2156**
19	**Rennweg**	**144**	**170**	**314**
20	**Kaiserjägerstrasse (until October 2009)**	**174**	**33**	**207**
21	**Tivoli-Stadion (until October 2009)**	**9**	**7**	**16**
22	**Triumphpforte**	**14**	**50**	**64**
23	**Universitätskreuzung**	**170**	**517**	**687**
24	**Wiltener Platzl (since September 2009)**	**0**	**331**	**331**
25	**Mobile_innfo (changing)**	**0**	**490**	**490**
26	**Mobile_innfo_2 (changing)**	**0**	**153**	**153**
	All locations (valid incoming)	**6066**	**11917**	**17983**

To get a better overview the following histogram shows an easy to compare data presentation.

Figure 7: Valid incoming location information



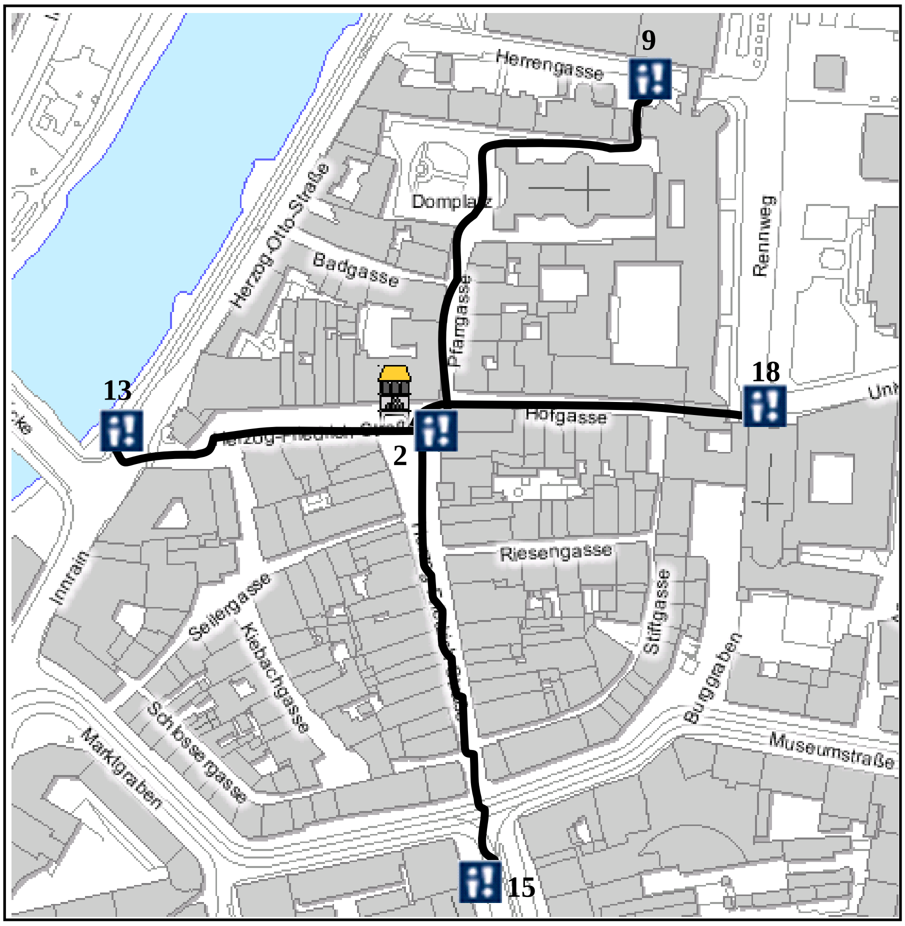
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
EURO2008	189	437	114	94	144	17	238	340	124	6	991	273	909	369	366	213	12	719	144	174	9	14	170	0	0	0
After EURO2008	518	980	273	2	125	887	490	1659	414	2	854	60	1076	303	443	616	27	1437	170	33	7	50	517	331	490	153
Sum	707	1417	387	96	269	904	728	1999	538	8	1845	333	1985	672	809	829	39	2156	314	207	16	64	687	331	490	153

The user role is the central classification of a user within the ILBI system. Per definition, a tourist is spending less time in Innsbruck than a local user. Therefore, it is self-explanatory, especially regarding the user role distribution showed in section 4.1.1., that with the accumulated system operating time tourists are not as often tracked as locals. The data clearly reflects the assumed effect. During the EURO2008™ tourist (21.82%) generated 12.90% of the valid tracking data. However, during the whole system operating time in 2008 only 7.37% of the data can be assigned to the user role tourist.

The host city of Innsbruck organized a special football fan zone for the EURO2008™ with video walls, bars, restaurant, music concerts stages and other event related services. The most relevant RFID antennas in this zone where “Altes Landhaus” and “Maria-Theresienstrasse”. Both are situated close to the central historical town. Interestingly, in this zone an appreciable higher rate of tourist triggered data was collected. The same phenomenon was observed at the alps-wide biggest public viewing event area at the ski jumping arena “Bergiselstadium”. A significant higher tourist quota can also be seen at RFID antenna “Rennweg” which is situated between the river Inn and the “Court Gardens” (36.11%). After the EURO2008™, consequently without the city’s fan zone, only “Rennweg” still generated a significant higher tourist quota. It seems that compared to tourists, locals do not use the riverside walk and do not take the pedestrian bridge which is right at the RFID antenna.

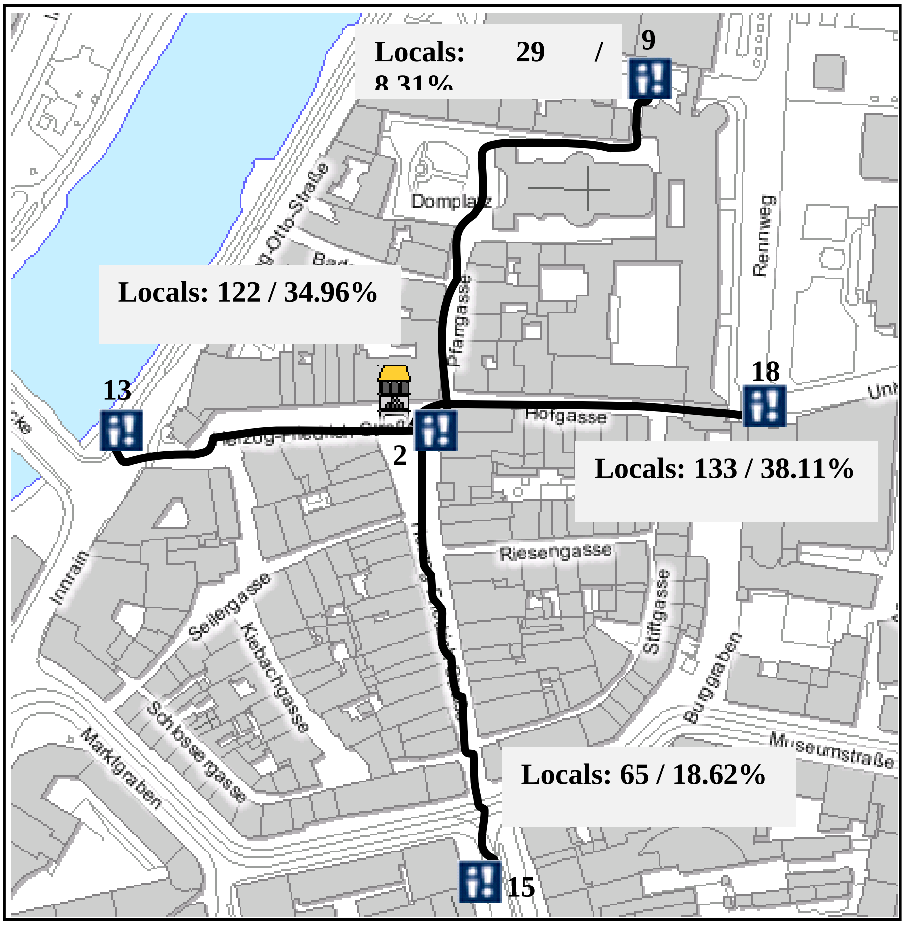
After looking at the data the paper gives an idea of future analysis. For this aim, personal movement patterns of event visitors are exemplarily shown within the historic town of Innsbruck:

Figure 8: Area to analyse movement patterns



For the below evaluation of movement patterns, tracking data of the EURO2008™ is used. The idea is to find out which way a tourist or local is likely to take if located at the "Golden Roof" and leaving the historical town. Therefore, 437 unique cases (385 locals, 52 tourists) were evaluated. In total, 399 unique movements (i.e. 349 locals, 50 tourists) were clearly identifiable. Results from this movement evaluation are shown as follows:

Figure 9: Analysed movement patterns



The results impressively show that the majority of tourists leave the historical town through the "Hofgasse" and, thus, are passing RFID antenna 18 (i.e. "Rennplatz").

Cross selling potentials

The world wide unique information system in Innsbruck is mainly financed through the INTERREG IV A Bavaria-Austria project "intelligent local-based information" until December 31st 2010. Since the project goal is not only to develop innovative technologies, processes and cross-border information systems but also to conduct a business study to potentially secure further usages, the project team heavily involves the local industry, commerce and service providers, respectively. So far, especially shops and gastronomy participated by using the system to promote special offers and conditions for ILBI users. Every partner gets the first 500 messages with a clear benefit for the user (e.g. coupons) sent out for free. After the first 500 sent coupons the content partner pays a reasonable price per message. Generated revenues are used to cover the locating costs. During operation time in 2008 1,327 coupons were sent to users. 9.34% of the coupons were sent to tourists which is a higher quota than for the historical and cultural (7.46%) and event (8.69%) related information messages. Every coupon has a distinct coupon number known by the coupon partners and the receiver. After evaluating anonymously the used coupons by interviewing the coupon partners it was found out that at least 148 coupons where converted. That means that about 11.15% of all coupons sent to users fulfilled their commercial purpose. It is, however, not known how many users were stimulated to consume at the coupon partner without using the coupon, for example through buying a different product or utilising a service not affected by the coupon.

Conclusion and outlook

The study shows that an innovative information system with a modern and autonomous infrastructure can help personalize mega sport events and additionally collect information on the movement patterns of participating user groups. Through the specific architecture and business logic of the rule engine valuable information can be generated and pushed to the users (e.g. event visitors). Especially the fulfilment of privacy regulations can be optimized by an autonomous system like ILBI. To conclude, the most important study findings are:

- Mega Sports Events can be effectively personalized by adequate business logics and technology.
- Compared to locals, tourists show significantly different movement patterns.
- Intelligently provided local-based information seems to have an effect on consumers' buying behavior.

Below, some limitations of the study are quoted: Firstly, although the 26 antennas of the active radio frequency identification (RFID) system were located at strategically relevant points within the host city of Innsbruck, only isolated squares of acreages ranging between 400m² and 7,000m² were covered. Thus, no area-wide coverage was realised. Similarly, at the destination supplier side only a selected set of highly interested firms voluntarily participated at the study. Therefore, the results have rather exploratory then representative character. Thirdly, also the sample of final-users may eventually be biased as participating test-users are characterized as predominantly technology affine individuals, thus, immediately accepting to carry around the previously submitted RFID chip. Fourthly, in order to increase the analytical power to analyse user-generated tracking data in the future, data mining methods are highly recommended. Data Mining is defined as the process of discovering meaningful new correlations, patterns and trends by sifting through large amounts of data stored in repositories using pattern recognition techniques as well as statistical and mathematical techniques (Larose 2005). Typical mining tasks are prediction, classification, clustering and association. Most prominent mining techniques are neural networks, decision trees, k-means clustering and market basket analyses through association rules. Finally, for the purpose to get most reliable information on guidance methods for visitor management at mega events a quasi-experimental study design is recommended to measure the effects of particular information SMS on movement patterns and buying behaviour of event visitors (Box et al. 2005). For example, to improve the evaluation of coupon effects additional observations of the coupon partners' entrance door with specific RFID infrastructure could be favourable. Experimental designs are characterized by the fact that there is a definition and control of the independent variables before putting them into the marketplace, trying out different kinds of stimuli on customers rather than observing them as they have naturally occurred.

Acknowledgement

We gratefully acknowledge the support of this project through local authorities such as the "Tiroler Zukunftsstiftung" and the city of Innsbruck, Austria. We also acknowledge the professional cooperation with the University for Applied Science of Rosenheim, the city of Rosenheim and the "Landkreis" of Rosenheim, Germany.

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SPORT IN THE CITY: THE SEARCH FOR SERIOUS SPORT TOURISTS

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Abstract

This study explores the social worlds and consumer behaviors of endurance athletes and competitive ice climbers as serious sport tourists. Serious leisure is the systematic pursuit of a core activity so substantial, interesting, and fulfilling that participants launch themselves on a leisure "career" to acquire and express a combination of special skills, knowledge, and experiences (Stebbins, 2006). Those who travel in pursuit of serious leisure sport experiences are serious sport tourists. One quality of serious leisure is the unique ethos and social world for its participants. Findings from in-depth interviews with subjects reveal that endurance athletes are less social but tend to be more conspicuously consumptive than climbers. Climbers value camaraderie, environmental ethics, and are not high-end tourists as they are conditioned to no or low cost accommodations. Implications of study findings and recommendations for future research are discussed.

Introduction

Serious leisure is the "systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer core activity that people find so substantial, interesting, and fulfilling that, in the typical case, they launch themselves on a leisure career centered on acquiring and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge, and experience" (Stebbins, 2006). Serious leisure participants distinguish themselves by the: 1) need to persevere at the activity, 2) availability of a leisure career, 3) need to put in effort to gain skill and knowledge, 4) realization of various special benefits, 5) unique ethos and social world, and 6) an attractive personal and social identity (Stebbins, 2006). Considerable time, effort, and financial investments are made on one's chosen leisure pursuit, and without financial compensation. The rewards include "fulfilling one's human potential, expressing one's skills and knowledge, having cherished experiences, and developing a valued identity."

Many who are serious about leisure are competitors in nonprofessional sports, as Shipway and Jones (2007) found among distance runners. They operationalize "serious sport tourism" as travel to pursue one's serious leisure-sport interests." Green and Jones (2005) suggest that sport tourism can provide serious leisure participants with (1) a way to construct and/or confirm one's leisure identity, (2) a time and place to interact with others sharing the ethos of the activity, (3) a time and place to parade and celebrate a valued social identity, (4) a way to further one's leisure 'career', and (5) a way to signal one's career stage.

Serious sport tourists take sport participation to another level. They are focused and highly committed to experiencing their sport to the fullest, wherever that may be. Serious sport tourists demonstrate such a strong commitment to sport participation that to the less committed, boarders on obsession. For example, elite gymnasts and their families sacrifice normalcy for specialized and intense training, often with high social, psychological and financial costs. Though mere children, the rigors of daily training and diet at specialized facilities away from home and friends can make sport a work-like obligation. Serious youth sport tourists are often accompanied to competitive events by their serious parents. They spend more money on sport-related goods and services, travel more frequently, and stay longer and spend more per night than other tourists (Getz, 2008; Scott & Turco, 2007). Destination marketers have purposely targeted youth sport participants because of the relatively larger entourage (and anticipated consumer spending) that accompanies them.

Purpose

This paper examines two types of serious sport tourists, serious sport participants and serious sport spectators. Endurance athletes as serious sport tourists are analyzed from extensive literature reviews and interviews to reveal insights into their social worlds. Further, interviews and survey data from competitive climbers shed light on the importance of the sport in their lives and the extent to which they will go to pursue their sport passion. Further, data obtained from surveys at the Little League Baseball World Series (n=341) and 2007 Cricket World Cup (n=394) identify the consumer behaviors of spectators with friends and relatives competing in the event.

Theory/Issues

Most serious sport tourists are not elite athletes; the vast majority are amateurs. The 50-States Marathon Club is comprised of amateur runners who have completed a marathon in each state in the U.S. Besides the serious time, financial and physical demands to run a marathon, the added travel and accommodations costs to run in every state demonstrates the high level of commitment these athletes have toward their chosen endeavor.

Running means money – at least for cities hosting major marathons. A study of the Fourth Annual P.F. Chang’s Rock n’ Roll Arizona Marathon & ½ Marathon by Northern Arizona University reported that the 34,000 runners registered for the 2007 race generated $44 million to the state’s economy and more than $2 million in tax revenues. Over half the runners were from out-of-state, placing demands on area hotels, eating and drinking establishments, and retail shops in Tempe, Phoenix and Scottsdale, the race co-hosts. The top five states of origin for out-of-state runners were California, Illinois, Colorado, Wisconsin, and Washington (www.runnersworld.com). Despite a recession in 2008, North American-based companies spent an estimated $84 million to sponsor marathons, triathlons, 10Ks and other running events, up 8.4 percent from $77.5 million in 2007, according to the International Events Group (www.sponsorship.com). Running may be one of the few recession-proof leisure activities; other than a pair of shoes one need not spend money to participate, unless electing to race.

A marathon is too short for some sport enthusiasts; ultra-marathoners run twice the distance or more. Ultra runners value space and find that there are too many people at big city marathons for their liking i.e. the real Berlin Marathon boasts over 45,000 participants. The Badwater Ultramarathon is recognized globally as "the world's toughest foot race." The event pits up to 90 athletes against one another in extreme environmental conditions; covering 135 miles (217km) non-stop from Death Valley to Mt. Whitney, California in temperatures up to 130F (55c). One obviously does not wake up in the morning and decide to run the Badwater; it requires years of serious, dedicated endurance training.

For many serious sport participants, one event is not enough. The demand for multi-sport events including duathlons (run, bike, run), triathlons (swim, bike, run) and adventure races is considerable. There are over 400 USA Triathlon-sanctioned clubs in the U.S., and the largest triathlons in the U.S. attract over 5,000 competitors. Sanctioned events range from sprint, Olympic, half-Ironman and Ironman distances. In the sport of triathlon, the most recognizable and prestigious is the Ironman Triathlon. The physical demands to prepare for and compete in an Ironman imply a serious commitment to sport. To earn the title of Ironman finisher, one must first swim 2.4 miles, cycle 112 miles and then run a marathon (26.2 miles). Most of the 22 official Ironman races held worldwide have a capacity of 2000 entrants, with some accepting up to 2500 athletes. Consumer demand is so high for Ironman events that entries will sell out on the first day of open registration. Countries hosting Ironman events in 2008 included Australia, Brasil, China, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, South Africa, Spain, New Zealand, U.K. and U.S. The sport's consumer profile is a marketer's dream: young, educated, affluent, and brand conscious. A high-end triathlon bicycle costs up to € 10 000; add € 500 for cycling and running shoes, race helmet (€ 200), wetsuit and goggles (€ 600), entry fee (€ 400 for the 2008 Ironman Austria), and scores of accessories (i.e., bicycle rack for the car, sunglasses, cycling gloves, spare bicycle tire and tube, water bottle, sports drink, running hat, socks, etc), and the significance of a triathlete's financial investment in the sport becomes evident. A 2008 survey of *Triathlete* Magazine readers found that 70% had taken a domestic trip, and 19% a foreign trip in the last 12 months specifically to participate in a triathlon (www.triathlete.com). Most triathletes competed in five races annually. They are primarily male (76%), married (74%), with children age 17 or younger (51%), and have a median household income of $US 133,200.

Local merchants expecting a big boost in retail or dining sales from hosting racers may be disappointed. Endurance sport participants conserve their spending (and energy) before the big race, and afterwards most are too spent physically to spend money locally. Event marketers recognizing this pattern of consumer behaviour typically stage a race expo where athletes must pick up their entry packets and can shop at sponsor booths a day or two before the race. Many hoteliers in host cities require guests to stay a minimum of two nights during race weekends.

Distance runners are common subjects for serious sport researchers because of the time commitment necessary to successfully participate in the sport (Funk, Toohey & Bruun, 2007; Wheaton, 2000; Yair, 1990). McGehee, Yoon, and Cardenas (2003) studied involvement with running among members of a running club and found that highly involved runners participated in more events, both home and away from home. Higher involvement also correlated with more particular information searching for running and events. Funk, et al. (2007) revealed that motivation to participate in an international sport event (Gold Coast Marathon) arises from prior sport involvement, image of the host city, and perceived travel benefits i.e., escape, social interaction, prestige, culture experience, etc.

Shipway and Jones (2008) explored the experiences of 'serious' participants travelling to take part in the 2007 Flora London Marathon using an ethnographic research design. Data collection commenced four months prior to the Marathon and involved monitoring the experiences of participants, and semi-structured interviews with participants in the two-week period after the event. Analysis revealed that participants strongly identified with the activity of running, heightened by the travel experiences surrounding the marathon event. Several consequences of this sense of identification emerged including the unique ethos, language and behaviors of participants, the need for significant personal effort to complete the event, the perseverance of participants in the activity, both in terms of training and competing, the lasting benefits obtained by the runners through participation, and the 'career structure' associated with distance running. Participants also followed behaviors prescribed by a particular prototype associated with the running subculture, resulting in homogeneity of dress, behavior and values amongst the group. For new members of the running subculture, looking the part of an avid runner may be important to fit in, particularly if they are novices or less talented runners. Wearing running gear (even when not running) communicates a serious commitment to the sport and helps form the basis for their personal and communal identity. The fleetest runners, however, are immediately accepted by the running community, regardless of what they wear.

Cause-related sport tourists

Participants in the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training (TNT) program demonstrate a serious commitment to sport and the organization's cause. Since 1988, more than 340,000 volunteer participants have helped raise over US$800 million for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society through Team in Training.

TNT has chapters in population centers across the U.S. and provides training to run or walk a full marathon or half marathon or participate in a triathlon, or a century (100-mile) bike ride. Team members raise funds to help support the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society in exchange for a life changing experience, certified coaches, training clinics (specific sports, equipment, nutrition, stretching), personal fundraising Web site, support from staff and teammates, a fundraising mentor, event fees, and lodging and airfare to more than 60 accredited events in the US and abroad. The Society uses 74 cents of every dollar raised for cancer programs, funding research to find cures to leukemia, Hodgkin's and non-Hodgkin's lymphomas, and myeloma.

In 2008, the year of their twentieth anniversary, TNT trained more than 30,000 runners, walkers, cyclists, triathletes and skiers who participated in major marathons, triathlons, century rides and cross-country ski races all over the world. A day or two before a TNT event, volunteers usually travel together on a plane to a specific destination. The night before an event such as a marathon or a half-marathon the volunteers celebrate with a pasta party to recognize "honored teammates" and individuals who have raised large amounts of money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Some sites of events in which TNT participates include San Diego (Rock and Roll marathon and half-marathon), Orlando, Florida (Disney marathon and half-marathon), Austin, Texas (Capital of Texas Triathlon - Olympic Distance), Dublin Marathon, Lake Tahoe, Nevada (America's Most Beautiful Bike Ride), Tucson, Arizona (El Tour de Tucson century ride), and Anchorage, Alaska (Tour of Anchorage cross country ski marathon and the Mayor's Midnight Sun running marathon and half-marathon). From a research standpoint, does the sport make the participant serious or the cause they are running for - or both?

Methods/Procedures

Telephone and in-person interviews with 12 marathon runners from Pennsylvania and Illinois were conducted in November 2008. Data from in-depth interviews with 45 of the 52 total participants in the 2009 Ice Climbing World Cup Finals in Busteni, Romania 7 February 2009 were also analyzed (Turco, Dinu & Goicea, 2009). Questions included direct spend in Busteni, length of stay, visitor group composition, etc., modified from Scott and Turco (2007). A second survey was conducted two weeks after the competition to determine when participants began climbing, prior sport participation, social benefits of climbing, self-identification as a serious climber, travel behaviors, etc. Competitors represented national climbing associations from Bulgaria, Italy, France, Korea, Romania, Russia, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and the United States. Markus Bendler, Austria and Maria Tomokolonova, Russia, were the overall Men's and Women's World Cup Champions, respectively.

Results

Ten of 12 marathoners were members of a local running club and participated in occasional club training runs and races. Most subjects trained alone but three occasionally ran with other runners. Though scholastic running teams compete against one another most perceive the sport as an individual pursuit. Runner A stated that running alone is convenient and permits contemplation: *My schedule is such that I must run early in the morning on some days and in the evening on others, making it difficult to arrange runs with others. I like running by myself. I can think about what I need to do for work. Sometimes I even think about my running while running!* Subjects had been running marathons for an average of eleven years, and participated in an average of nine races per year; two of which were marathons. Two subjects were pursuing entry into the 50 States Marathon Club. Runners seemed willing to spend a great deal of money on shoes and gear even if it meant foregoing purchases of other goods and services. All wore running clothes as casual wear when not running. Eight of 12 marathoners had spouses, partners, or significant others who were not runners. Three subjects ran in high school or college. Most started running competitively as adults. Only two subjects had a parent who ran; four had children who ran competitively. Runner B added: *I used to run with my son in a Baby-Jogger. Now he can run with me…except I go out too early in the morning for his liking.* Runner C commented about how seeing other runners made him feel: *I'm jealous when I see another runner and I've yet to have my run. It makes me want to get going.* Several runners purchased or received running books and magazines in the past 12 months. Most had received running-related gifts from others during the year. *I always get running socks in my Christmas stocking,* added Subject D. Nearly all subjects considered themselves to be serious runners. Stated Subject B: *I don't golf, work on cars, or garden. I run.*

Climbers stayed an average of 4.5 days in Busteni for the World Cup Ice Climbing Finals. Their average spend in Busteni was € 69.02 for lodging, € 53.54 shopping, € 72.50 for eating and drinking, € 28.18 for entertainment, and € 91.82 for other goods and services for a total spend of € 315.06. In aggregate, climbers spent an estimated € 16 383 in Busteni. Spend per day averaged € 70.01. Eighty-four percent of respondents had competed in the World Cup before the 2009 event in Busteni; 68.9% had previously visited Romania. Forty-two percent of the subjects had family and/or close friends travel to Busteni to watch them compete.

Most competitors in the 2009 Ice Climbing World Cup started climbing in their early twenties after participating in other sports e.g. football (soccer), gymnastics, equestrian. Most find climbing more physically challenging and rewarding than the other sports. Many were socialized into climbing from their parents and have spouses and siblings who also climb. All have acquired close friends through climbing.

Climber A recalled her early years in climbing: *My first climbing competition was a provincial competition in South Tyrol (Italy) in 1999. I was 12 years old. Climbing is something natural to me. When I was a child I climbed on trees or anything else I could find. In climbing, I like to be outside in nature and the possibility to travel around, to see new countries, and meet new people. I think I am a quite ambitious person and I like it to confront myself with others and to give my best during a competition. I also like the competitions because they offer the possibility to meet a lot of friends.*

Competitor B added: *First of all, I have been climbing since I was very young. For me it's a way to live. I need that. I love the effort it demands me: strength, elasticity and mental*

Why do you climb? Competitor C stated:

I like this sport. I like the adrenaline that I gain from it….and my friends that came from climbing. I like the places I have been because of the climbing. I like to check my level with other climbers at the competitions and on the rocks. I like to feel the way I feel when climbing a rock!

Asked why she competes in climbing events, Climber A responded: *I think I am quite an ambitious person. I like it to confront myself with others and to give my best during competition. I also like the competitions because they offer the possibility to see and meet friends.*

Climber D adds, *It is not only about the competitions - it is about the fun, about the beautiful places, about the relationships with my friends!* Competitor E describes her immersion in the sport. *I am completely fascinated by this sport. For me it is an extension of my life.* Varley (2006) asserts that adventure sports provide a break-away from society's prescribed norms, and several climbers commented to that effect. Competitor F stated, *I love the spirit of climbing in nature. For me it's the way to live. I need that.*

Conclusion

Results from this study reveal a glimpse into the social worlds of endurance athletes and climbers as serious participatory sport tourists. Included in this investigation are the local spend by competitors as partial impacts of sport participants' overall effects on host economies, in the latter case, Busteni, Romania. Mountain climbers are not high-end tourists. They are conditioned to no or low cost accommodations, typically sleeping in tents, sleeping bags, mountain cabanas or low cost hotels, dormitories or hostels. Their economic impacts on the host community are therefore minimal. World Cup ice climbing competitors, though not significant spenders, do serve an important role in the sport tourism system, attracting spectators (and their spending) to the destination, visitors who would not otherwise visit. In this regard, sport competitors can be valuable assets worthy of investment for a host community.

One need not be an athlete to be a serious sport tourist. Serious sport tourists also include spectators who follow their favorite team to attend away matches. In some cases, visiting sport event tourists outnumber (and out-cheer) home fans, negating the "home field advantage." Consider the legions of Manchester United fans that travel throughout the season to watch their team compete in person. Tour operations have been established on the club's website providing sport travel packages for its many serious sport fans. When ManU qualified for the May 2008 Champions League finals in Moscow, the club was allocated 21,000 tickets, most costing either £67 or £117. Add a £95 visa charge and accommodation costs in one of the most expensive cities in the world, and financing the final football expedition easily topped £1,000 per person.

What drives the football fan to religiously follow his favorite team? Adopting a social identity perspective, Jones (2000) identified four compensatory behaviors - in-group favoritism, out-group derogation, unrealistic optimism, and voice - in ensuring continued participation in football fandom. His model of serious leisure participation based upon these behaviors explains why engagement in such an activity is maintained.

Serious sport fans who travel to watch relatives and/or friends participate in sport events are termed WFRs (Watching Friends and Relatives). Scott and Turco (2007) found WFRs spend significantly more time and money in the sport city than other spectator groups. At the Little League World Series, the pinnacle of athletic achievement for 12-year old boys, player association makes a difference in terms of sport tourist spending, length of stay, and game attendance. Spectators with a player association spent nearly three times as much, mostly in travel, lodging, souvenirs and other. Some background on the event is needed to contextualize the research findings. Most teams qualify for the Little League World Series a week or two beforehand so expenditures are often made at the last minute, without the benefit of advance purchase discounts. It was surmised that for some visitors in this category, watching a friend or relative in the Little League World Series was a once in a lifetime experience, and they were willing to spend money on the event accordingly. They may have realized that they should experience all the Little League World Series has to offer, including attending most games, purchasing souvenirs, staying the whole time their child plays in the World Series, and eating out instead of budget meals. A comparison of consumer behaviors among domestic and international WFRs and other tourists at the Little League World Series is provided in Table 1.

The Little League World Series is the pinnacle of athletic competition for 11 and 12 year old baseball players, and family and friends of the participants who attended the event spent at significantly higher levels than other visitors. This finding is consistent with what Tang and Turco (2001) concluded about sport spectators, whose spending levels corresponded to their perceptions of the event's prestige. Fans who assigned more prestige to the event spent more than those who perceived the event as less prestigious.

Whether one endorses or opposes the practice of 12 year olds competing for sport supremacy, such championships exist and are widely popular. For parents living vicariously through their children's competitive sport participation, any price will seemingly be paid to see them excel, occasionally pushing beyond reasonable limits. WFRs may be similar to other 'fanatics' who assign great self-importance to their chosen pursuit, be it cricket, baseball card collecting, NASCAR, or Star Trek. Leisure fanatics have the propensity to travel great distances, collect souvenirs, autographs, memorabilia, and other collectors' items with vigor (Mackellar, 2006).

Table 1. Characteristics of WFR and other tourists at the 2005 Little League World Series

	Domestic WFR Sport Tourist	**Domestic Sport Tourist**
Travel party	3 persons	4 persons
Sessions attended	6 sessions	4 sessions
Length of stay	7 nights	3 nights
Spending	$2,337; $1,215 for travel	$668; $175 for travel
	International WFR Sport Tourist	**International Sport Tourist**
Travel party:	4 persons	2 persons
Sessions attended:	9 sessions	6 sessions
Length of stay:	11 nights	7 nights
Spending:	$4,550; $1,600 for travel	$3,200; $700 for travel

Source: Scott, A.K.S. & Turco, D. M. (2007). VFRs as a segment of the sport event tourist market. *Journal of Sport and Tourism*, *12*(1), 41-52.

Turco and Ally (2009) found that 12.8% of spectators at the 2007 Cricket World Cup had a friend or relative participating in the event. Spectators associated with traveled in larger visitor groups (3.51 to 2.93 visitors) and stayed more nights than other spectators (9.5 to 7.6 nights). WFRs spent considerable more money in the host economy than other spectators for retail shopping, lodging, transportation and items at the stadium (Table 2).

Table 2. 2007 Cricket World Cup WFR market comparison

Relative or friend participating in 2007 Cricket World Cup?

		Yes		**No**
Visitor group size		3.51		2.93
Length of stay		9.55		7.62
Spending:^				
Lodging	$US	4179	$US	1626
Retail shopping		732		380
Food/beverage		1846		810
Local transportation		749		326
Stadium items		448		226
Round-trip transportation		5057		2311
Other		597		397

^ Expressed as mean visitor group spending total by category

As WFRs travel more frequently to attend competitions, they adjust their spending behaviors. Turco (1997) noted that parents of young athletes who frequently traveled to competitions became adept at cost saving strategies thereby minimizing the impacts of the host economy. Ride sharing, bringing prepared meals and snacks, and taking motor homes or camper trailers are among the practices used by parents who travel with their young athletes to competitions. While Scott and Turco found no difference in spending among repeat and first time visitors with player association, further research is warranted. Repeat participation in the Little League World Series is rare for most athletes. Similar to the consumer behaviors of repeat visitors, it is anticipated that per trip spending by WFRs would diminish as they attend more sporting events in which their friends and relatives participate. Preliminary research on WFRs at the World Cup Ice Climbing Championships in Busteni indicate that they are as frugal as the friends and relatives they came to watch. Local spend was on average 60% less than tourists without a close association to competitors.

Should destination marketers and event promoters seek to lure serious sport tourists to their cities? From an economic benefit perspective, it would appear the answer is yes, though some athletes are peculiar with their spending habits surrounding competition. Marathon runners will conserve their energy before a race and are often too tired to shop following the event. Besides a high carbohydrate meal before the race (typically a pasta dinner), they will abstain from expensive gourmet meals. WFRs at marathons and other endurance events are free to spend liberally and eat as they see fit but may restrict their shopping and food indulgences out of respect for their travel companions who are competing.

This paper has devoted attention to endurance athletes and ice climbers as serious participatory sport tourists. The nature and physical demands of endurance sports necessitate a serious commitment of time, energy, and finances to successfully participate. To what extent are the commitments, levels of involvement, and behaviours of other serious sport participants similar/different from endurance sport participants? Gillespie, Leffler, and Lerner (2002, 301) observed the social world of dog sport owners (primarily women) and wrote:

> "…we find that the boundaries between real and alternative public social worlds blur, harden, or grow more permeable in the everyday life of a passionate hobbyist. Some ordinarily unquestioned antonyms of real world experience, such as work and leisure, family and non-family, masculine and feminine, fun and not-fun take on new meanings as leisure identities become central in (participants') lives."

Serious endurance athletes adhere to strict training, dietary and sleep requirements. For family and friends not participating in the sport, these requirements may seem extreme, costly, and detrimental to family cohesion. To avoid disrupting family schedules while preparing for triathlons, the author would drive to the local natatorium at 3:00 a.m., run 20 kilometers, return to swim 3k, and be home before his children woke up for breakfast.

McCarville (2007) questioned whether those not participating in serious sport would be excluded from the social worlds of their significant others. For example, how comfortable would overweight non-athletes be around hundreds of lean triathletes? Conversely, how comfortable would serious endurance athletes be around overweight and out-of-shape non-athletes? At what point does serious sport participation (and sport tourism) become an obsession? Serious sport participation may lead to serious problems i.e., over-training, injuries, eating disorders, neglecting professional and personal obligations, etc. Endurance events take their toll on one's body and injuries may ultimately halt sport participation. What happens to those who can no longer compete in ultras, marathons, and triathlons due to injury? Are they removed from these social worlds and if so with what consequences? The above questions about serious sport tourists are offered as potential areas for future research.

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Festivals and Cultural Events

DEVELOPING EVENT MARKETING STRATEGIES WITH MOBILE TELEPHONE POSITION DATA: CASE STUDY WITH LINDORA AGRICULTURAL FAIR IN ESTONIA

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Introduction

Public events have become an important part of the modern tourism industry. Public events are held for very di-verse reasons, they are usually inspired by tradition or the desire to celebrate something, driven by the needs of the local economy or motivated by the simple desire for financial gain. There is usually no single motivating factor, and there are numerous interested parties involved, whose interests may radically differ.

In order to investigate the meaning of public events and to assess their impact, we need to know the reasons for which public events are organised, the composition and number of visitors, and their target audiences. The origin of visitors, or their geographical background, is one important piece of information regarding the target audience. Some public events are very local, whereas others have a very extensive area, i.e. global events. Depending on their background and type, public events have different meanings and different marketing strategies. In order to develop a good marketing strategy, one must know about the background of the public event and also about tradi-tional visitor-specific parameters (the number of visitors, time spent in the area, the actual meaning of the event etc.). Knowledge of the background makes it possible to market events more successfully.

The aim of this study is to formulate principles of marketing strategy for public events that is based on parameters characterising the geographical background, using the specific example of an Estonian agricultural fair. In order to evaluate the event’s geographical background, we have used the novel method of mobile positioning (Ahas et al 2008), wherein we cull statistical data regarding the visitors’ origin and the length of their stay in the area from the log files of mobile service providers. The event on which our study focuses is the Lindora Fair in rural southern Estonia that is held during the autumn harvest period

Theoretical starting points

Event tourists, like any other tourists, are willing to travel to a certain location for a certain period of time in order to participate in the events taking place in that location and to partake of an experience that is not possible where they live (Falassi 1987, cit. Getz 2008), and the only difference from ordinary tourism lies in travel goals. Event tourism includes events of different kinds – business events, sports events (the Olympic Games, for instance), cultural events (festivals, fairs) and other mega-events (Getz 2008) that attract large numbers of people. Event tourism also differs from other kinds of tourism in that it is more the enthusiasm and cooperation of local people and not the surrounding nature or the high level of the region's development that is crucial for the success of the event (Getz 1993; Janiskee 1994; Turko, Gursoy et al. 2004).

One important geographical consideration is the background of the event's visitors: who comes from where and for how long. Research on events, however, so far has paid little attention to the geographical background (Bohlin 2000; Wicks, Fesenmaier 1995; Verhoven et al. 1998; Lee, Crompton 2003, cit. Getz 2008). There are several reasons for this. The majority of research on events has been conducted by cultural, economic and tourism ex-perts, but geographers have examined this topic less often.

In the case of large international events, visiting countries have been studied (Daniels 2007; Herrero et al. 2006). Herrero et al. (2006) have pointed out an interesting fact – although the expenses involved in organising a (cul-tural) event are concentrated in the immediate vicinity of the event's location, their actual impact covers a much wider area. Thus the determining of the geographical background of an event's visitors is important for the fair dis-tribution of expenses and revenue and to help organise better events. In evaluating the geographical background of different events, we must differentiate between those tourists who arrive in the area solely because of the event, and those who have other reasons to be in the area, but nevertheless visit events taking place there (Saayman, Saayman 2005).

Discussions of the geographical background of events have also been informed by the central place theory (Daniels 2007). In order to produce a product or provide a service, a certain minimal level of quality that allows the minimal needs of customers to be satisfied must be achieved. The maximum level of quality of local services is indicative of the maximum distance that a consumer is willing to travel in order to acquire a particular product (Dennis et al. 2002, cit. Daniels 2007). The distance that a customer is willing to travel is also increased by the uniqueness and attractiveness of the product or service – the more attractive the product/service, the farther the customer is willing to travel.

The travel cost method is also an important means of assessing the impact of an event.

The Lindora Fair

The Lindora Fair takes place at an important crossroads in the village of Lindora in the municipality of Vastseliina each year, always on October 28. The fair has a long tradition, it has been taking place since 1920s and is self-organising, i.e. farmers and other vendors simply come together and the fair follows its natural course without too much organisation. It is a typical rural fair that takes place after the end of the harvest period. The most common goods sold at the fair are handicrafts, agricultural produce (vegetables, meat, etc.), homemade products and an-tiques. The fair takes place on the border of Setumaa (a historical region in south-eastern Estonia) and is linked to the identity of the Seto minority. Visitors are charged no entrance fee and vendors only pay a symbolic participa-tion fee. According to the classification of tourism events based on functionality (Getz 2008), the Lindora Fair is a regional event that takes place on a regular basis and has a moderate demand among tourists.

Despite the fact that the date is fixed, vendors, customers and visitors arrive from all over southern Estonia. It is an excellent event to celebrate the end of the harvest period.

Methodology

This study employs methodology developed by OÜ Positium LBS and the Chair of Human Geography and Re-gional Planning of the University of Tartu for the quantitative assessment or mapping of the geographical back-ground of events (Ahas et al 2009). In order to assess the geographical background of events, we need to know the origin of the visitors, the number of kilometres they have travelled, the means of transport they have used, the time and money they have spent on travel and the number of days they stayed. On the basis of this information, we could directly assess the geographical background of the event or generate certain coefficients. Of course, a detailed study would need to consider more thoroughly the event's background and people's reasons for coming, but the primary aim of the present study is the quantitative mapping of the geographical background, so that we could evaluate events and compare them with each other. This quantitative model could serve as a foundation for a qualitative evaluation of events and the application of further research methods.

The conceptual framework for the assessment of the geographical background of events (Ahas et al 2009) consists of the following stages:

Determining the number of visitors – quantitative assessment. The average number of weekly visitors is com-pared to the average number of visitors during both the previous week and the week following the event.

Determining the origin of the visitors – the origin of both local and foreign visitors is determined by the administra-tive unit they come from (country or county of origin).

Determining the length of the visitors' stay – the number of days a visitor spends at the location.

Determining the geographical background of the event's visitors – determining the visitors' geographical region of origin and the distance travelled, and visualising the result on a map.

In this study, the four above-mentioned parameters are established using the method of passive mobile position-ing (Ahas et al 2008a). In reality, the parameters may also be calculated using other data and qualitative sources of information.

A mobile positioning system is a system that allows one to trace the location of active handsets in relation to cellu-lar antennae, satellites or other mobile phones. Mobile positioning may involve numerous methods and tech-niques that allow different degrees of precision. Mobile positioning can be divided into two broad categories – ac-tive and passive. Active mobile positioning means the tracking of the location of a specific mobile phone, requiring permission from the phone's owner. Passive mobile positioning data is automatically stored in the log files of the service providers after each instance of phone use. The method of passive mobile positioning used here obtains the data regarding the location of call operations performed by unidentified phones from the log files of the service provider. Such phones have been searched out which have performed a call operation at the Lindora Fair and, with help from the service provider, we have calculated the time during which those phones were in the area, pa-rameters regarding their arrival in the area and the estimated place of residence and work of the phone (and owner). No such phones whose owner's place of residence or work was in the Lindora area (in the respective network cell) were used in the present study, however, the population living in the area is very small.

All data were anonymised by the service provider and locations were established to the nearest network cell. The data used in the study are anonymous and it is not possible to identify the actual persons behind the data, as they have been protected by a specially developed personal data protection system. The passive mobile positioning data in this study has been used in accordance with the principles of personal data protection established both in Estonia and EU (Directive 2002/58/EC, 2002).

This study has used passive mobile positioning data obtained from the log files of EMT, which is the largest mo-bile service provider in Estonia. Based on the number of active SIM cards, as of December 2007, EMT's share of Estonian mobile networks amounted to 48% (Eesti Telekom 2007). Passive mobile positioning data in Estonia is gathered by OÜ Positium LBS, which has signed agreements with the two biggest Estonian mobile service pro-viders for the safe handling of data. Positium has developed a web-based monitoring system Positium Barome-ter, (Ahas et al 2008b) to satisfy the information needs of various interest groups (local government authorities, scientists, planners and tourism companies) .

Field work methodology

In addition to mobile positioning data, data of an inventory of events is also used in the Positium LBS model. Such data are obtained by performing surveys of 3-10 people at events. In surveying salespeople, every third salesper-son is asked to fill out a brief questionnaire containing the following questions: age, sex, geographic origin, how many times they have attended this event, and what they are selling. A thorough questionnaire consisting of about 30 questions that precisely determine the reason for visiting, their origin, the way they obtained information about the event, the amount of money spent and the means of transportation used to get to the event, is used to survey 32 visitors selected using a quota sample (separated by gender and age). Thirdly, at the entrances to the event a mass survey of the event's background is held, during which the following questions are asked: the per-son's age, sex, geographical origin and how many times they have attended this event.

Geographical background of Lindora Fair

The Lindora Fair, which took place on 28 October 2008, had roughly 5000 visitors. That is more than the total of people living in surrounding parishes. Five performers had been invited to participate in the cultural programme, including a group from Russia. Security was provided by 12 traffic controllers / security guards.

The organisers estimated that there were 400 salespeople at the event, and the organisers of this research counted 350 during the first half of the day, 130 of whom were selling agricultural products, 120 manufactured goods and 100 handicrafts. The salespeople were from Russia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and from all parts of Es-tonia. Auctions and lotteries were also held at the event. Figure 1 shows the salespeople's geographical origin based on the questionnaire. Numbers of salespeople are also provided in table 1.

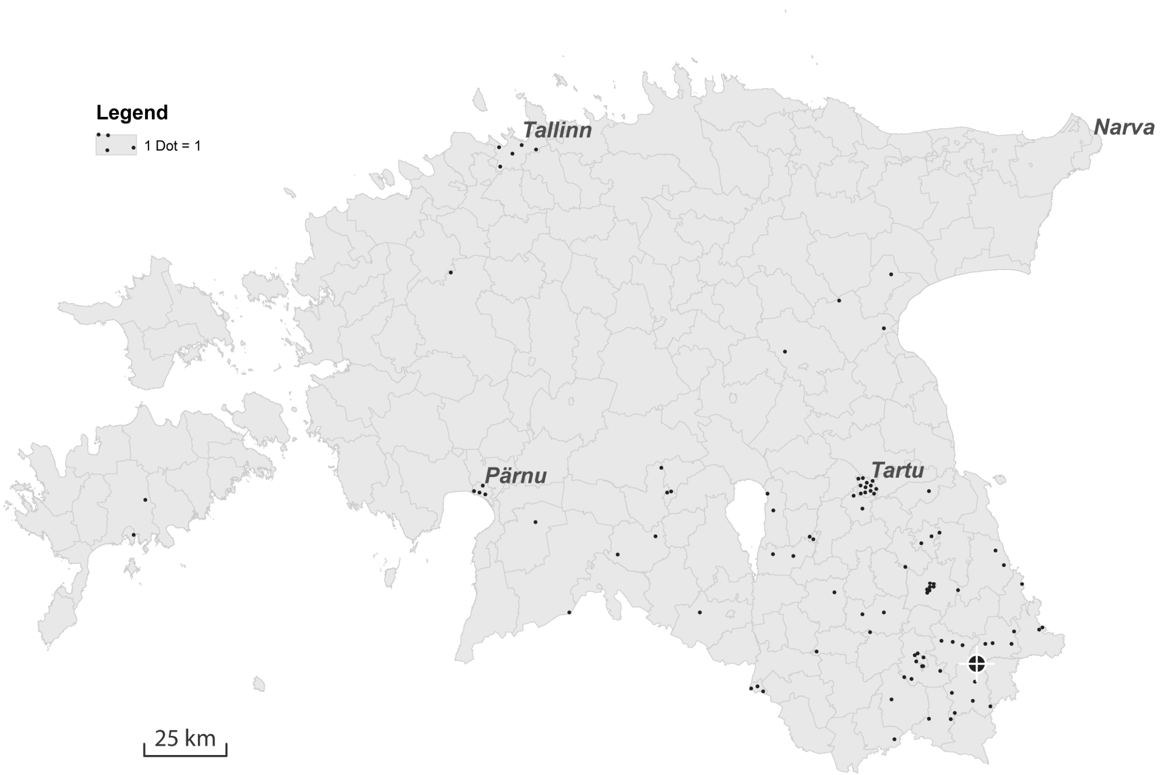

Figure 1. Geographical background of salespeople at Lindora Fair, based on survey (every third salesperson was surveyed).

The geographical background of the individuals who answered the questionnaire containing 32 thorough ques-tions was centred in south-eastern Estonia, i.e. the region in which the event took place. The majority of visitors were from neighbouring parishes and cities in Southern Estonia.

594 responses were obtained from the brief questionnaire on the background of the event, from which it became evident that the majority of visitors were from south-eastern Estonia and especially the parishes neighbouring the event (Figure 2). The age of visitors (Figure 3) was higher than average, and persons between the ages of 40 and 70 predominated. Although the largest number of participants were attending the event for the first time, the Lin-dora Fair is notable for the number of return visitors (figure 4); there were 111 persons who had visited more than 10 times, although they were mostly inhabitants of surrounding parishes.

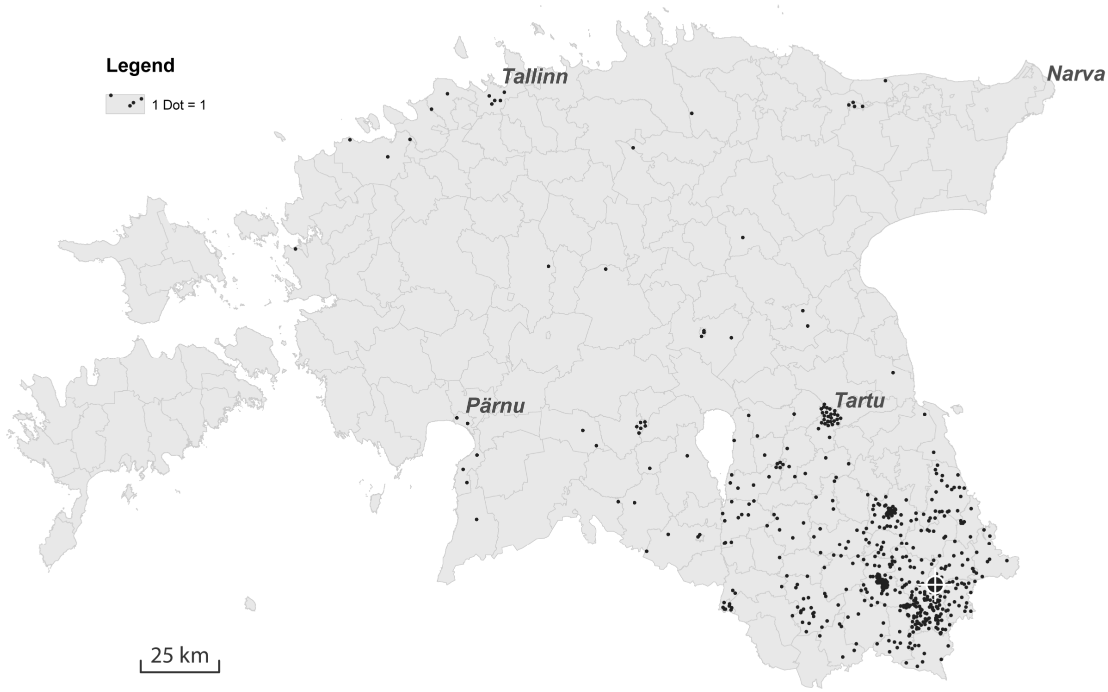

Figure 2. Geographical origin of visitors to Lindora Fair, based on 594 persons surveyed.

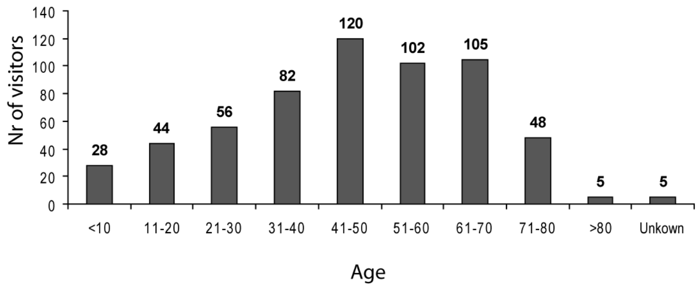

Figure 3. Age composition of visitors to Lindora Fair, based on survey of 594 persons.

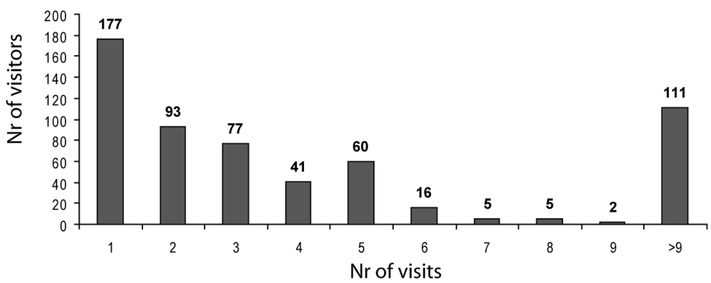

Figure 4. Number of visits to Lindora Fair among the 594 persons surveyed.

According to mobile positioning data, there were 878 visitors from Estonia at the Lindora Fair whose homes were not in local mobile cells. Considering the distribution of EMT in local counties as reported in a study performed by the Department of Geography at the University of Tartu and TNS Emor in 2008, the total number of visitors may reach 1500, and as many as 1800 including inhabitants residing in local network cells. One must take into consid-eration that vendors and other service providers are in the same data set, i.e. they cannot be distinguished. The background of the Lindora Fair based on mobile positioning is presented in the map in figure 5. This indicates that the Lindora Fair is primarily a local event, and that most visitors come from nearby parishes. Thus 49.5% of visi-tors come from an area with a radius of 25 km, which is the most local background of any fair studied in Estonia that takes place outside a city. In densely inhabited cities, there are many residents in a small area, and for that reason a great deal of local importance is also possible in an urban context. The proportion of participants from cities at the Lindora Fair is a very small 30.8%, which is the also lowest of all of the studied events in our data-base.

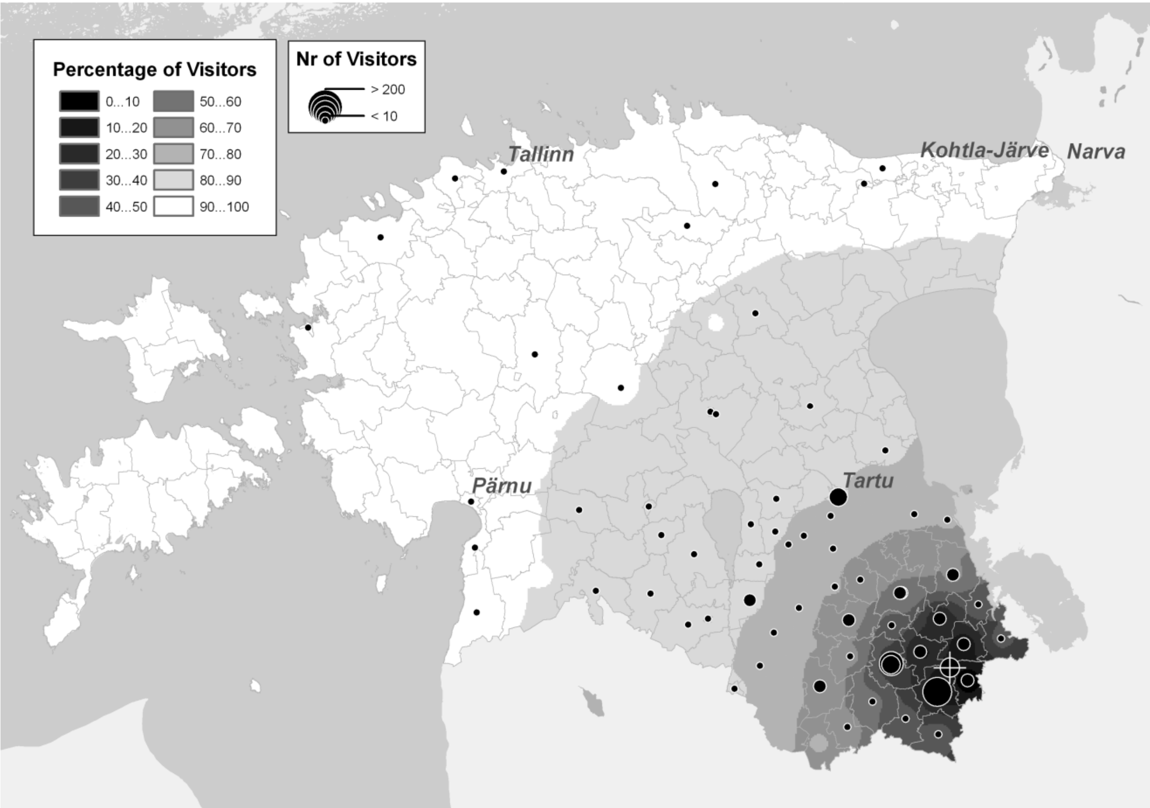

Figure 5. Mobile positioning data on the background of the Lindora Fair. Cumulative densities of visitors' places of origin are presented in 10% intervals.

Visitors to the Lindora Fair also had a shorter average travel distance (the number of km travelled to the fair and back), averaging 128 km per person. The summary distance travelled by all visitors to the event was 11,900 km, which makes this an event with a small zone of influence in the context of Estonian events. The locality of the visi-tors to the fair is also expressed in the distribution of the visitors' homes by quartiles: 75% of visitors were situated in the 100 km zone (figure 6). Mobile positioning data were also used to assess visitors' length of stay in the reion. 85% of visitors stayed 1 day, 10% stayed 2 days and 5% stayed longer. Indicators of length of stay in the region are considerably shorter than for summer events; this is most likely a result of the nature of the event and the season.

Since the Positium LBS database already contains positioning data for 3 years, it is also very important to assess customer loyalty. It is easy to determine the number of persons who have visited the Lindora Fair for the last three consecutive years. It turned out that over 60% of visitors have attended for at least 2 years, and the closer to the fair's location, the more loyal customers one finds.

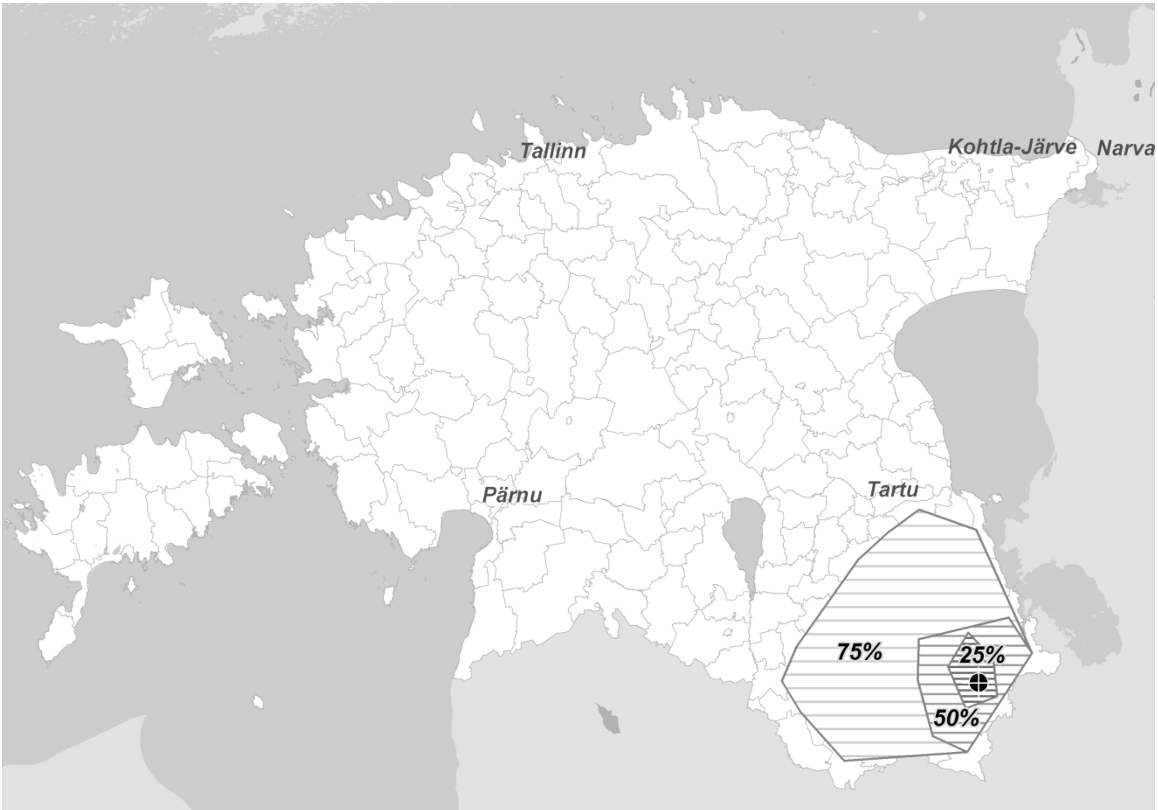

Figure 6. Location of visitors to Lindora Fair, by quartiles. Based on mobile positioning data.

Discussion and conclusions

It is difficult to assess the background of events, because the gathering of empirical material is costly. Studies of the Lindora Fair presented in this research that used both mobile positioning data as a three-part inventory of the event are one possibility to obtain an overview of the visitors to the event, their geographical origin and the indica-tors of previous visits to the region.

Since mobile positioning data is relatively new and has not been used very often (Ahas and Mark, 2005), it is cer-tainly important to assess the method's effectiveness. For that purpose, we performed a comparison of a ques-tionnaire-based survey (594 forms) and mobile positioning (describing about 1500 phone owners) (figure 7). This comparison shows that mobile positioning generally describes the visitors and their origin similarly to the exten-sive visitor study. Parishes with 1 or 2 visitors have been reflected in both databases. The overall increase in the number of participants is also in close correlation. The local Vastseliina parish is over-represented in the ques-tionnaire data (100 responses) compared to the mobile positioning data (57 individuals), because it is not possible to distinguish the mobile phones of inhabitants of the local network cell using this method. They are situated at the event's location everyday. Põlva parish and Puka parish are also over-represented and out of proportion, since their mobile network is unusual: all of their significant antennae are actually located in neighbouring parishes. In order to overcome this problem, the Positium LBS team has prepared a special interpolation programme that uses Voronoi tessellation. This is already used in Positium Barometer, but it is not yet included in the module used to study public events (www.positiu.ee/tourism).

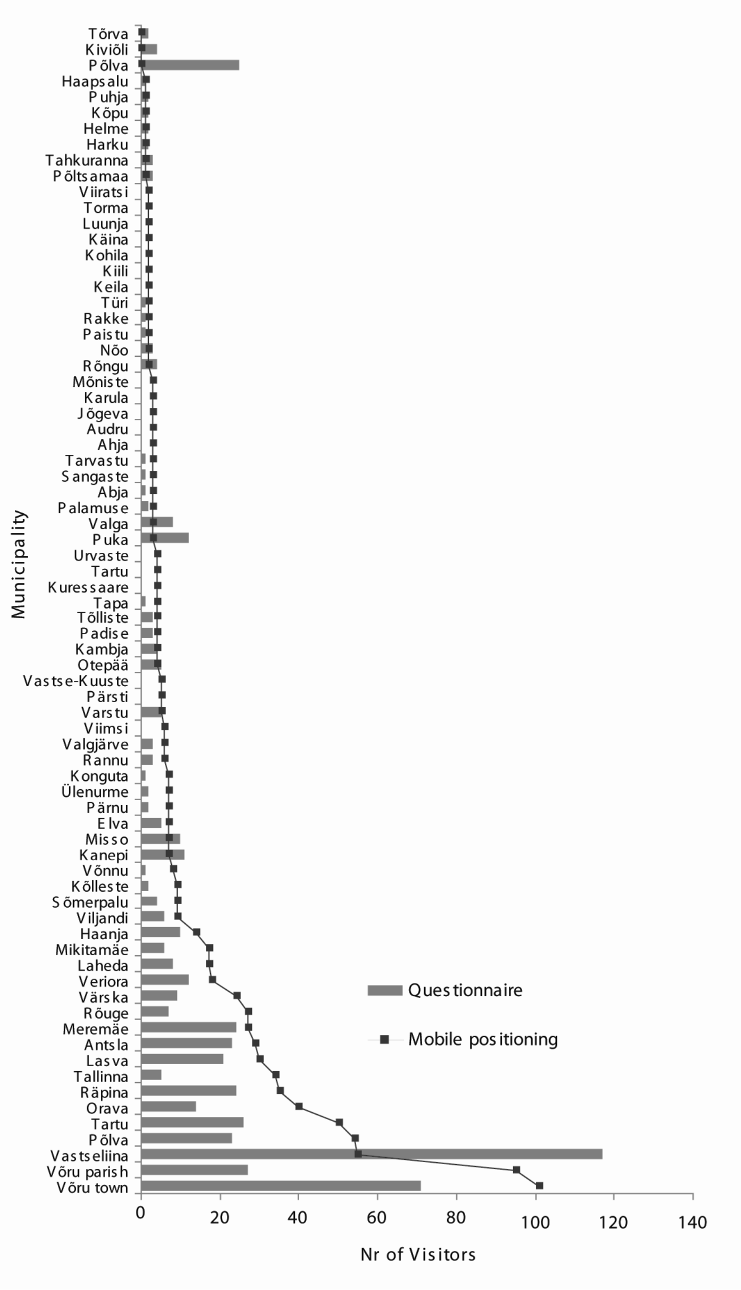

Figure 7. Comparison of mobile positioning and questionnaire data for evaluating hinterland of events

This kind of method for the assessment of the visitors and background of events is of course a quantitative method. One definitely needs to know substantial indicators about events, and also visitors' motives and evalua-tions. The quantitative method that arises from mobile positioning, however, makes it possible to assess the nu ber of visitors to an event relatively objectively and cost-effectively. It also makes it possible to ascertain the backgrounds of events (i.e. the geographic zone of influence), much more effectively than before, which is impor-tant both for the assessment of influence and the performance of marketing work. Financiers and salespeople also need information about events, so that they can more objectively prepare their strategies. Our database has frequently been used for the compilation of marketing strategies, and the following are the three most important quantities in this context: a) the number of visitors; b) the proportion of return visitors; c) the background of events, i.e. where visitors live. Other quantitative indicators, for instance travel distance and locality, have been of interest to economists in order to assess the quantity of money spent by visitors in the region.

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PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE EVENT PRACTICE: THE ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

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Abstract
The tourism industry and its related sectors have weathered much of the criticism for making a large contribution to environmental pollution. With its exponential growth over the past decade or so, the event sector is drawing attention as an increasing contributor to this global problem. The event sector, primarily its professional associations are providing guidance to members as to how to produce events which have minimal impact or reduce their impact on the environment. The purpose of this study was to investigate the role professional associations play in promoting the sustainable agenda and to evaluate their role in educating event professionals on sustainable event practices. An analysis of the content of a number of event management professional associations was conducted and found that overall; associations seem to place limited value on the sustainable events agenda.

Keywords: sustainable events; green events; professional associations

Introduction
The issue of sustainability is at the epicentre of international concern with pressure on both commercial operators of all sizes and from all industries, and private citizens to make adjustments to their daily lives which reduce negative impacts on the environment. The tourism industry and its contribution to climate change are increasingly a focus of discussion and debate. More specifically, the event industry has attracted attention and there is now an increasing international debate about how to encourage the industry to become more environmentally sustainable. Events are an important component of the tourism industry as they offer valuable economic, social, cultural and educational benefits, and potential growth in tourism for many international destinations. Events, by their very nature, create waste. Properly managed, events can recycle excess materials and supplies in useful and meaningful ways, and they can do so using methods that result in minimal impacts to the environment. Increasingly industry practice is to complete an environmental impact assessment (EIA) as part of the planning process for any event, and the importance, and need for this has recently become more significant not only from an environmental preservation perspective, but also from a corporate social responsibility perspective, and from a marketing and public relations perspective. Until recently, EIAs

have been the only means by which event organisers can estimate what level of effect their event is going to have on the environment.

It is clear that the event industry has experienced phenomenal growth over the past decade in terms of the number, diversity and popularity of events on offer. As the number of events increase, there is a growing realisation that there is a need for event management professionals who are able to create, organise and manage events (Getz, 1997). Although many events are managed successfully by dedicated volunteers, increasing competition across all sectors of the event industry is giving greater impetus to the need for more fully professionalised events with staff that are well educated, experienced professional event managers (Arcodia & Reid, 2004). As such, professional associations play a significant role in facilitating the education and advancement of event management professionals working in the industry. Moreover, there are few assessments on the quality of the information, and in how much detail it is provided. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the role professional associations play in promoting sustainable events and to evaluate their role in educating industry professionals on sustainable event practices.

Literature Review

The body of research which needs to be considered when discussing events and climate change is clearly that which deals with the debate about sustainability. Once again, little has been explicitly published about events and sustainability; however there has been extensive discussion about tourism and sustainability. Sustainable tourism is an overarching paradigm which incorporates a range of approaches to the tourism/environment system at destinations (Clarke, 1997), and focuses on balancing tourism development with community, habits and wider environmental concerns (Bramwell & Lane, 2008). Authors such as Hunter (1997) and Bramwell and Lane (2008) note that sustainable tourism is not limited simply to environmental sustainability, but also includes issues of social sustainability and economic sustainability. One of the most popular definitions of sustainability was developed by the World Commission on Environmental and Development: "…development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need" (WCED, 1987). In a tourism context, the World Tourism Organisation (2001) offers the following definition:

> Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, and biological diversity and life support systems.

The tourism and events industries are of a cognate nature with complex linkages and mutual dependency (Cooper, 1998), and events are often viewed as an integral component of tourism development, often used as a means of attracting visitors to a destination (Getz, 1989; McDonnell, 1999). As such, sustainable development strategies should also include dealing with the impact events have on the environment (Arcodia & Cohen, 2007).

Sustainability and Events

The growing popularity of travelling to attend festivals and other events (Boyd, 2002) has driven researchers to examine this form of tourism. Although festivals and special events are often considered catalysts to tourism and more benign to the destination's socio-cultural or natural environment (Weiler & Hall, 1992), there are many negative impacts associated with them which are predictable. For example, festivals tend to involve a considerable number of visitors in a limited geographical space for relatively short periods of time, as maximising the number of visitors is often equated with high levels of success from an economic perspective (Kim et.al, 2007). This congestion leads to the possibility of environmental degradation of a host community. The long-term success of community based tourism such as festivals depends not only on maximising economic benefits (Kim et.al, 2007), but also on protecting the natural environment in which the tourist experience takes place (Johnson, Snepenger & Akis, 1994).

Kulshrestha, Rao, Azhaguvel, and Kulshrestha (2004) explored the emissions and accumulation of metals in the atmosphere due to firecrackers and sparkles during the Diwali festival in India. On the occasion of this festival, people burn crackers and sparkles to express their happiness, leading to metal pollution of the air. In this study, metal concentrations in the air were observed to be very high as compared to background values on previous days. For some metals the concentrations were observed to be higher than reported at industrial sites. On the day of the festival the concentrations of metal pollutants increased by 18 to 15 times. This study indicated that burning firecrackers and sparkles for Diwali is a very strong source of air pollution, contributing significantly to high amount of metals in the air.

Wang, Zhuang, Xu and An (2007) investigated the air pollution caused by the burning of fireworks during the lantern festival in Beijing and found that the emissions of pollutants, such as sulfur dioxide, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, suspended particles, and several metals, aluminum, manganese and cadmium, were over five times higher on lantern days than normal days. These are again associated with serious health hazards due the increased air pollution and create a serious oxidisation effect which has a devastating impact on the environment.

Climate Change and Events

Weather and climate play important roles when planning events and can affect an event on a short-term basis or for the entire duration of the event. For example, rain during a conference in Hawaii may not negatively impact conference proceedings but may impact social activities (e.g. conference dinner, post-event tours) or cold, wet conditions for the duration of a fair or sporting event can reduce the overall attendance at the event. Jones, Scott and Abi Khaled (2006) studied the implications of climate change for outdoor special event planning in Canada and reached a series of conclusions. Firstly, climate variability does have an impact on special events (through measures such as revenues, attendance and visitor satisfaction) and it is important for organisers to understand the extent to which visitation, quality of experience and event operations are sensitive to weather and climate (Jones et. al, 2006). This understanding can in turn help in planning to minimise weather-related risks. Another challenge highlighted by the authors is the effect of climate change on events which are centred on certain naturally-occurring phenomena (such as the Annual Cordova Shorebird Festival in Alaska, which has been affected by a change in bird migratory patterns due to the change in climate) or environmental conditions (such as the Golden Rainbow Ice Fishing contest in Minnesota, which was cancelled in 2002 due to unsafe ice conditions). This impact could spell the demise of many events which rely on natural resources of this type or serious re-development aimed at moving with the changes. Such changes could have major negative consequences for regions which have high economic dependency on the economic benefit that the event brings to the area.

Professional Associations and their Role

Professional associations act as a conduit for information between the members and the wider community of the profession they represent. Research into the role of professional associations has been scant. Some work has come from the information technology sector. Swan and Clark (1990), Swan and Newell (1995) and Robertson, Swan and Newell (1996), have published on the role of professional associations in the diffusion of new technologies. Chamberlain (2003) studied the role professional obstetrical and midwifery associations play in reducing mortality. A larger body of literature has been published in the management context such as by Gruen, Summers and Acito (2000) who investigated relationship marketing activities, commitment, and membership behaviours in professional associations and Ammons (1994) who looked at the role of professional associations in establishing and promoting performance standards of governments. Greenwood, Suddaby and Hinings (2002) studied the role of professional associations in the transformation of institutionalised fields and suggest professional associations are important for three reasons. First, they are arenas through which organisations interact and collectively represent themselves to themselves. They allow organisations within the same community to interact, and to understand reasonable conduct and the behavioural dues of membership. Second, shared characterisations develop not solely as a result of interaction within a community, but also as a product of interactions with other communities. Professional associations act as representative agencies that shape, define and redefine the practice of interaction appropriate for their respective memberships. Third, professional associations can play an important role in monitoring compliance with normatively and coercively sanctioned expectations.

In an event management context, research has been pioneered by Arcodia and Reid who have published a series of papers exploring the roles and responsibilities of professional event associations. In their 2002 study of the mission statements of professional event associations, they reported that over half of the mission statements evaluated placed importance on the exchange of information and on the association providing continuing educational opportunities to members. This emphasis is to improve professionalism, contribute to increased levels of satisfaction for both customers and professionals and help promote the services provided by the industry more widely (Arcodia & Reid, 2002). In their investigation into the educational role of professional event management associations, Arcodia and Reid (2003) concluded that professional event associations place a high importance on education and updating/up-skilling members which in turn should help the industry develop in a more strategic way.

Research Method

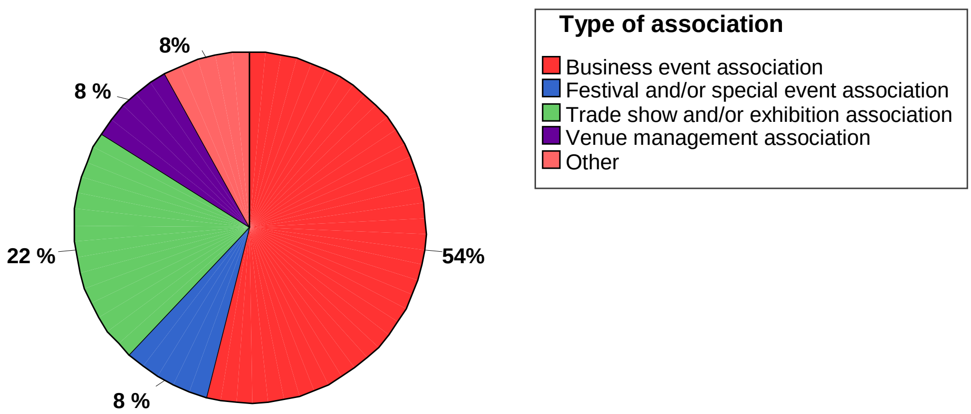
Data collection involved gathering information published on the websites of professional event management associations. A convenience sampling process was used to identify appropriate websites for the study. Sometimes called purposive sampling, the units of study were chosen not for their representativeness but for their relevance to the research questions and analytical framework of the study (Schwandt, 2001). In this study, websites were selected for a number of practical reasons. Firstly, the websites that were selected needed to be in English. Secondly, the websites selected needed to present a sufficient level of information that was able to be analysed.

The sample size for this study was fifty professional event management associations. A large sample size is not usually associated with qualitative research as there is interest in establishing quality through in-depth analysis of data. Associations were initially identified from the list created by Arcodia and Reid (2003). This list was supplemented by associations which have either been launched, or have created a web presence since that research was published. These were identified using internet search engines such as Google and Yahoo. Using two search engines reduced the possibility of missing an association. Analysis took place on two levels. Firstly, it identified the extent to which professional event associations place value on sustainable event practice. This was done by analysing how many associations included information on sustainable events. Secondly, of the websites that contained useable information, it used an evaluation matrix of categories to provide a standard framework of analysis that covered channels which are commonly used to disseminate information electronically including a dedicated tab/page, Presidential/CEO statements, reference to sustainable practice in the associations' mission statement, the provision of a training program, the provision of practical reference materials, the provision of information in an association publication (e.g. newsletter, magazine) and the provision of an award for best practice in sustainable events. The categories of analysis were continually reviewed and refined as the data collection process was conducted and new themes emerged. The data was collated and analysed firstly via SPSS to provide some basic statistical information on the sample. This provided insight into how associations were providing information to their members and what formats were most popular.

Results & Discussion

Of the fifty identified associations, the majority (54 per cent) were business event associations. The next most frequently occurring type of association was 'trade show and/or association' (22 per cent) followed by 'festival and/or special event association' (8 per cent) and 'venue management association' (8 per cent). Figure 1 provides a complete breakdown of the types of associations. This gives an insight into the size of the business event sector and highlights the need for further research into the area.

Figure 1 Types of Associations



Categories of analysis

At the commencement of data collection, a series of initial categories were created based on the literature review. These categories were areas of the website where information on sustainable events could be found. Upon analysing the websites in the sample, a series of additional categories emerged. These were themes which occurred regularly on the websites. A final list of fifteen categories was identified and this paper reports on the first five of these.

General Information

This section provides a brief analysis of the websites which contained information on the identified categories. Of the fifty websites in the sample, 18 per cent had a page on their website dedicated solely to sustainable event information. The majority (82 per cent) did not contain such a dedicated page. This does not necessarily mean that the websites did not have information in other areas. As noted by Crosetto and Salah (1997) and Kloss (1999), one of the roles of professional associations is to offer specialist advice and information. As one of the fundamental services provided by the association is access to information, having a dedicated page as part of the website would help to make the information easily identifiable to event organisers who seek it. Table 2 provides a breakdown of responses to this item.

Table 2: Dedicated page

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	9	18.0
No	41	82.0
Total	50	100.0

The information contained on these pages in most cases included checklists such as: (Association 12: ‘*the green meetings* checklist’); and suggestions on how to become more sustainable (Association 15: ‘*top 10 things you can do to go green’)*; reports (research and opinion-based) on sustainability or climate change and their impacts on events (Association 10: ‘*how special events are going green to protect environment’; Association 15: ‘the economic impact of green meetings’*); and reports on investigation on how many event mangers are ‘going green’ (Association 33 ‘*Three-fourths of event pros add "green" elements to events’)*. Several pages included information on carbon-offsetting or carbon-neutral events.

Sustainability Statements

A statement about sustainability is different from the mission statement of the association. These are declarations of the association’s position on sustainable events. Only 10 per cent of the websites analysed included a sustainability statement. Websites that did feature a statement couched the issue within a corporate social responsibility (CSR) framework, for example:

> *What is Corporate Social Responsibility? Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the recognition that an organization is inextricably intertwined with society and the earth and must take responsibility for its actions in regard to the “triple bottom line” of people, planet, and profit... (Association 10).*

> Furthermore, this association also acknowledged the importance on the triple bottom line. Recognising the triple bottom line as an appropriate business goal is becoming increasingly common in business, not only in the tourism industry, but in business more broadly.

Another association builds on the CSR perspective and provided members with a definition of their position, creating a 'Green' social responsibility statement:

> *To organise responsible, value-led live events that aim to have a positive social impact on people and a minimal impact on the environment… (Association 15).*

The importance of education about the issue was highlighted by another association that "…*aims to educate and influence its member organizations in achieving economic and strategic goals while minimizing adverse environmental impacts of the events they produce..." (Association 17).*

A number of issues arise from this data. Firstly, many associations mentioned that they would provide information, guidance and best practice to members about sustainable practice. Further, they encourage members to share and provide examples of successes or failures. Only one of the association websites that contained a statement on sustainability actually mentioned who or how the information that was available would be vetted or regulated to ensure that they were indeed providing advice that was best practice.

As pointed out by Arcodia and Reid (2003) accurate information on the status of the event industry is difficult due to its diversity, dynamism and the constant change. This highlights the importance of monitoring the information that is available. This same association also highlighted the importance of measured planning which is regularly reviewed and updated in light of industry developments:

> *… Additionally, organizations can adjust their administrative practices in very simple ways to reduce the environmental impact of their office operations on the environment. The committee will identify, as its first goal, simple steps which organizations can undertake to reduce their impact on the environment… (Association 17).*

Presidential and Mission statements

None of the websites in the sample contained a presidential or CEO statement which made reference to sustainable events, nor made reference to or included sustainable event practice in their mission statements. This is a serious omission as there is much evidence to attest to the value of mission statements to an organisation. A mission statement "tells two things about a company: who it is and what it does" (Falsey, 1989, p. 3). A number of other authors, such as Bart, Bontis, and Taggar (2001) and David (2007) offer similar definitions which hold true regardless of whether an organisation refers to this statement as a "mission statement," a "mission," a "credo," "our philosophy," "core values," or something else. Additionally, this statement may also outline where an organisation is headed; how it plans to get there (Abrahams, 1995); what its priorities, values, and beliefs are (Collins & Porras, 1991); and how it is distinctive (Ireland & Hitt, 1992). Corporations are urged to create mission statements for many reasons: to assert leadership (Klemm et al., 1991), to inform employees about the company's goals and unify their efforts toward accomplishing them (Bart, 1998; Ireland & Hitt, 1992), to serve as an effective public relations tool (David, 2007; Bart, 1998), to provide a rationale for allocating resources (David, 2007; Bart, 1998), "to guide current, critical, strategic decision making" (Drohan, 1999), and to inspire enthusiasm about the firm (Bartkus et al., 2000; Collins & Porras, 1991). In addition to specific benefits that are said to accrue from having such a statement, successfully completing the mission statement process demonstrates that a firm can think reflectively, plan carefully, work collaboratively, and make informed decisions (Williams, 2008). Thus, it can be expected that corporations with mission statements would be more successful in the marketplace than those without. All associations in this study sample had a mission statement which mentioned wanting to be '*an industry leader'* or '*<u>the</u> industry leader'*. If event management professional associations wish to give their members the competitive edge in the marketplace, a mission statement which comprehensively embodies the association's core values, and in this discussion, its interests in sustainable practices, is vital

Training programs and certifications

As noted by Getz (1997), there is a growing need to develop event managers who are able to manage events to ensure professionalism in the industry remains constant and of the highest possible standard. Although the nature of professional work itself is contested, one distinguishing attribute identified in the literature is the learned nature of a professional occupation, i.e. the degree of training and education required (Greenwood, Suddaby & Hinings, 2002), or the application of a particular and unique set of knowledge and skills (Welsh & Woodward, 1989). Starr (1982, p.15) argues that a profession 'has service, rather than profit, orientation enshrined in its code of conduct' so that conforming to a service ideal is also a key defining feature of the professions. Professionals are assumed to be self-regulating on an individual and corporate basis in terms of competence and ethics, and responsible for service provision and outcome (Friedman & Phillips, 2001).

Furthermore, no websites contained information on certification for practitioners who used sustainable event practices. According to Friedman and Phillips (2001), the process of professionalisation involves manipulating perceptions about the degree of skill and judgement required to carry out professional tasks and task domains are monopolised by controlling entry through certification. Members could be motivated to be more sustainable in practice if there was opportunity to be able to market themselves as accredited/recognised sustainable practitioners. Associations need not offer their own accreditation program, they could also provide information on existing programs, such as the 'Green Globe' program, which is designed specifically for the tourism and associated sectors. Arcodia and Cohen (2007) investigated accreditation for the event industry using Green Globe as a case study. The Green Globe program benchmarks tourism and hospitality businesses against a series of indicators that have been designed to measure and assess the current standing of the operation (Arcodia & Cohen, 2007).

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that professional event associations are only partially fulfilling their role. Very little is being done to encourage event managers to ensure the event they are organising is sustainable as there is little operational and strategic training or accreditation on offer to members. Secondly, there is no evidence to suggest any efforts have been made in developing compliance standards for the industry. Few associations recommend accreditation programs and none appear to offer their own accreditation program. It could be argued that because no government or other legal requirements exist, there is no need for practitioners or associations to monitor practices.

Of the associations that do provide members with information, it is largely limited to practical reference guides that are helpful, yet sometimes impractical at the user end. There does not appear to be any differentiation in the information that is provided to the different event management sectors (i.e. business events, festivals and special events, trade shows and exhibitions). Some could argue that this is a way to promote standardisation in information; however the needs of each sector are different in many ways. As such, advice needs to be tailored to suit each sector. Standardised practices can then be achieved both within each sector and more broadly. Attention also needs to be given to the practicality of the suggestions that are provided. For example, suggesting that all food scraps are composted instead of putting them into the rubbish is time consuming and often unrealistic for reasons such as the size of the event, the timing of food service and lack of space in the area to include an additional set of bins.

This exploratory study could be expanded by surveying professional association members to paint a more comprehensive picture of what associations are doing to promote sustainable event practice. This could be extended further again by including interviews with association members to establish what their perceptions of sustainability are, what their perceptions of sustainable events are and what resources they feel they need to help achieve sustainable practice. It could also establish if there are any needs that are peculiar to the sectors as hypothesised.

There is also a need to explore the synergies between the greening of events and the sustainability debates more broadly from a CSR perspective. Using the results of this study as an example, associations appear to couch sustainability within a CSR framework. It would be of benefit to have a clearer understanding of why and investigate if this is the best way for it to be accomplished. This would also help associations better understand their position on sustainability. With the underlying notion of sustainability being the ability to meet the needs of today while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future, the event industry needs to focus further at achieving more sustainable practices.

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CULTURAL HERITAGE SHAPING ONLINE DESTINATION IMAGE OVER TIME

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Abstract

Image is one of the most relevant forces attracting visitors to a destination, and the mushrooming of blog communities contributes to shaping (or modifying) visitors' perceptions of a place. Large scale content analysis over time is believed to better capture the relevant factors shaping a destination's image. This study, based on the analysis of 667,983 articles from 11 international online travel communities and social travel guides, identifies image factors using a Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA) approach. LSA reveals attributes associated to the destinations across documents, which have been analyzed over time. The large number of documents allows observations on sub-periods (quarters) as well as the assessment of seasonal changes of the online image representation. The aims of this study are two-fold. The first goal is to outline the weight of cultural components on the overall online image of a city destination. The second goal is to monitor and identify changes of image components over time.

Keywords: Online Destination Image; Latent Semantic Analysis; City Tourism; Cultural Heritage; Creative Industry

Biographical Notes

Irem Arsal is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management at MODUL University Vienna. She received her PhD in Travel and Tourism Management from Clemson University, South Carolina, where she worked as a research and teaching assistant from 2004 until 2008. She obtained her master's degree in Information Systems Management from Ferris State University, Michigan. She holds a BA in Economics (Marmara University, Istanbul). Her research interests include Web 2.0, influence of user generated content on decision making process of travelers, and online consumer behavior.

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Acknowledgment: We would like to acknowledge the RAVEN (Relation Analysis and Visualization for Evolving Networks; http://www.modul.ac.at/nmt/raven) project funded by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation & Technology (BMVIT) and the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) within the strategic objective FIT-IT Semantic Systems (www.fit-it.at). Furthermore, we would like to thank Gerhard Wohlgenannt and Johannes Liegl for their efforts regarding the Latent Semantic Analysis.

Introduction

The concept of destination image has been the object of numerous studies in the field of tourism for a long time, being a relevant element both in understanding tourists’ behavior as well as destination marketing. Tourism literature about destination image covers four major areas, namely the importance and the impact of destination image, the image formation process, the sources of information and the factors influencing destination image (see figure 1).

Figure 1. Major concepts of destination's image – a framework

Crompton (1979) defines destination image as "the sum of all beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has of a destination". A vague construct for which a common definition has not yet emerged (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Mazanec & Schweiger, 1981), definitions of destination image commonly identify two components: one connected with perceptive/cognitive evaluations and the other with affective appraisal. The first component refers to individuals' knowledge and beliefs about the object, and the second concerns individuals' feelings toward the object, whereby individuals' characteristics and experience play a major role. Cognitive images tend to be formed prior to the affect, as demonstrated by a study from Sonmez and Sirakaya's (2002), while affect more likely serves as a principal variable between perceptual/cognitive evaluations and the overall destination image (Beerli & Martin, 2004a). The overall destination image is formed in combination of these two components, whereby affect more likely influences the overall image than perceptual/cognitive evaluations and affect together (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999).

There is general agreement that the cognitive component is the antecedent of the affective component, and that the evaluative responses of consumers stem from their knowledge of the object (Beerli *et al.*, 2004a). The observation of the cognitive component of the overall image is therefore as much important as that of the affective component, especially in a situation of multiplication of information sources. The mushrooming of travel blogs and communities in particular provides an interesting environment for the observation of the factors shaping the cognitive/perceptual component of destination online image. Travelers' knowledge and beliefs about the destination indeed are mainly influenced by secondary information sources such as guides, word of mouth and travel blogs (Beerli *et al.*, 2004b) and recent research suggests that travelers make extensive use of consumer generated media (CGM) for planning leisure trips (Yoo, Lee, Gretzel & Fesenmaier, 2008). Written in the style of a diary or direct communication, blog entries do not dwell much upon affective aspects, but mainly report about visitors' actual experience in the destination. This shapes the destination image according to the activities and attractions told by the creators of the content rather than on affective judgments, mediated as in traditional image studies.

This study aims to observe the cognitive/perceptual component of online destination image. The primary goal is to describe a destination's profile, in general as well as its formation over time, as it is mirrored in online documents and blogs. Produced results can be of immediate use for destination marketers. The choice of a large city (Austria's capital Vienna) as tourism destination within this research demonstrates the potential of this type of analysis to its full extent.

Destination image: concepts and models

Destination image is one of the factors that affect the decision-making process about which destination to visit. The motivational forces that lead people to travel to a specific destination can be distinguished as push and pull factors. The push factors comprise the socio-psychological motivations underlying individuals' decision to travel, while pull factors include those tangible and intangible factors connected with a specific destination, such as beaches, historic resources, as well as the marketed image of the destination. Traditionally the pull factors have been conceived as useful to explain travelers' actual choice of the destination, once the decision about the type of holiday experience has been made (Uysal & Hagan, 1993; Baloglu &Uysal, 1996). As a pull factor, image is one of the motivational variables having an influence on the selection of the travel destination. Moreover, destination image affects the travel satisfaction or dissatisfaction of an individual, which depends on the congruency of visitors' expectations and the reality (Pike, 2002). This impact implies that, for a destination image to be effective, it must be valid and realistic and not based on fantasy; it must be believable, simple, have appeal and differentiate a destination from the others by emphasizing the unique characteristics (Joppe, Martin & Waalen, 2001). According to LaPage and Cormier (1977), tourists form a mental image of the destination prior to visiting a destination, and this image is more effective than the actual facts when choosing a destination.

Typically, image formation models correspond to person-determined (organic) or destination-determined (induced) images, the former reflecting individual differences in information processing and interpretation, and the latter reflecting the actuality of the destination (MacKay & Fesenmaier, 1997). Following this dichotomous conceptualization, the factors influencing the formation of destination image can be roughly classified into resources available at a destination and personal factors. Baloglu and MacCleary (1999) for instance define these two components as stimulus factors (e.g. physical object) and personal factors (e.g. previous experience). The destination environment having a direct effect on image formation comprises natural landscape, historic interests, hotel design, tourism infrastructure and destination service quality (Sirgy & Su, 2000). On the other hand, personal factors include motivations, experiences of vacation travel, and socio-demographic characteristics of tourists. Some other factors are previous visits or direct experience with a destination (Hahm, Upchurch, Wang, Milman, & Underberg, 2004; Milman & Pizam, 1995), cultural background (McKay & Fesenmaier, 2000), the experience level of the tourist (Baloglu *et al.*, 1999), tour operators, travel agents, guidebooks, familiarity (Baloglu, 2001) and word of mouth (Baloglu & Mangaloglu, 2001).

The process underlying the formation of destinations' image is generated by different agents, more or less authoritative and under the control of tourism authorities. Tourism literature provides different attempts to model the formation process of destination image. Gunn’s (1972) image formation model for instance refers to organic and induced agents. Organic agents are not directly related to tourism, such as newspaper reports, books and movies, while induced agents are formed from marketing promotions and advertisement of destinations. Building upon Gunn’s work, Gartner (1993) proposes eight agents of image formation that are related to the degree of control of the promoter and the credibility of the target market. The four induced categories refer to agents in control of destination marketers. The autonomous agents are authoritative and credible sources of information, while organic agents (unsolicited or solicited) refer to information obtained by others, as in the case of blog communities.

Travel blogs and communities fall under this last category. Tourism-related information provided through online media complements, and sometimes substitutes, traditional information sources, standing out as an established agent of image formation, which may change the image of destinations (Cho, Wang & Fesenmaier, 2002; Govers, Go & Kumar, 2007). In particular, the information provided by travel communities and blogs is considered to be a form of word-of-mouth, which is the most influential source of information when making a travel purchase (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2008). Such secondary information sources mainly influence the cognitive component (prior visitation) of destination image (Beerli *et al.,* 2004b).

Focusing on the content generated by users of travel blogs and communities, this study aims at investigating the contribution of diverse destination-determined agents to the overall online image of a destination. The primary goal is to describe destination’s profile as it is mirrored in online documents and blogs. Another interesting aspect connected with online image concerns its variation over time. Typically, the overall destination image changes slowly, but its components may present more frequent fluctuations (Gartner 1986; Gartner & Hunt, 1987), under the impact of advertising campaigns, promotional activity or media coverage. The Internet is the ideal source for retrieving real-time information and communicating quick changes, which mirrors the actual life in the destination better than traditional media, bound by assembling and distribution times. The flexibility of the Internet as medium for the provision of information and the vivacity of tourism supply in urban environments represent the ideal conditions to investigate changes of image profile over time.

City tourism, culture and event

Cities, as tourism destinations, offer a wide portfolio of facilities, services and amenities. Among them, culture plays a major role, to the extent that the two are often mentioned as one unique product, at least in Europe. On this continent, cities’ central roles, in the political, social and cultural life of a country have, contributed to the centralization of a distinctive heritage of past civilizations. The tangible and intangible heritage of a city reflects the evolution of the society through its various stages, resulting in various layers of memory, upon which the contemporary essence and image of a city is built. Cultural cities represent a key product in Europe’s overall tourism offer and a key competitive factor for Europe's overall competitiveness. Culture is regarded as a sustainable avenue for socio-economic development, replacing the traditional manufacturing industries. It generates assets, such as skills and products, which contribute to the social and economic well being of the community (Andersen, Prentice, & Guerin, 1997). Besides enhancing the rich heritage of the past, European cities nowadays make attempts to attract contemporary forms of culture, such as the creative industries, namely business segments in which creativity plays a major role in the provision of products and services (Vienna Business Agency, www.wwff.gv.at [May 20, 2009])

Vienna, the destination object of this study, fully represents this trend. The capital city of Austria has a remarkable past with its apex in the period when the city was the capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The city not only features an outstanding cultural capital ranging from classical music (the Viennese Classicism) to architecture (for instance, its Baroque castles and gardens), but also attracts contemporary cultural initiatives. Creative industries represent one of the core areas of economic focus for Vienna, accounting for biannual investments of 7 million Euros. A recent study commissioned by the City of Vienna on the economic potential of this sector underlined Vienna's well established urban and artistic cultural milieu (Vienna Business Agency, 2008). The choice of this destination, to investigate the role of culture, in its historical and contemporary expressions, as a tourism product therefore seemed to be appropriate.

Given that a clear-cut definition of cultural tourism has not been achieved yet, a framework of definitions of cultural tourism had to be set for this study to further analyze and categorize the different shades of culture. This study adopts the conceptual and operational definitions of cultural tourism and cultural attractions used in a study on cities and culture in Europe by UNWTO & ETC (2003). Cultural attractions are classified into three main categories, namely the Heritage, the Arts and the Creative Industry. In this framework:

'Heritage' refers to tangible (sites, buildings, etc.) and intangible aspects representing the cultural heritage of the past;

'The Arts' refers to the performing, plastics and visual arts representing the contemporary culture of the place;

'Creative' refers to the creative business, such as (graphic) design, multimedia, fashion and contemporary architecture.

Moving from this context, an operational list of cultural attractions belonging to each category was drawn from the extensive classification of cultural attractions outlined by Wöber, Grabler and Jeng (1998; 2000) and used by several European destinations to classify visitations to cultural sites (more information available at www.tourmis.info [May 20, 2009]).

These definitions have been used to classify the results of the analysis based on the applied Latent Semantic Analysis approach which identifies keywords that aim to identify concepts describing Vienna as a city tourism destination. Categories for non-cultural keywords have been created upon the meaning of the keywords themselves. The keywords have been independently grouped into these categories of meaning by the authors during a comprehensive analysis. The outcome of each individual analysis has been homologized in a second phase, in order to highlight and discuss different perceptions of keywords meaning. The result of the categorization process resulted in 12 categories over all (see table 1).

Table 1. Categories for keywords classification – theoretical framework, label and operational definition (adapted from UNWTO & ETC, 2005)

UNWTO framework	Category	Category label	Operational definition
Heritage	Historical tangibles	1	historical building, museum, church, monastery, historic street, castle, ruins, palace, historical cable car, historical train ride, historical metro, theater, opera, historic birth place, historical spa, historical viewpoint (e.g. tower), mines and caves, memorials and cemeteries
	Historical intangibles	2	language, cuisine, folklore, classical music, religion
Contemporary Arts	Performing arts	3	theater piece, opera piece, drawing, modern music
	Visual Arts	4	painting, photography, printmaking, filmmaking
	Plastic arts	5	sculpture, mosaic
Creative industry		6	fashion, design, web, graphic, textile, contemporary architecture, literature, jewellery
Non-cultural attractions	Streets, Addresses and Locations in Vienna	7	train station, street name, etc
	Accommodation	8	hotel name, etc
	Restaurants	9	restaurant name, etc.
	Nightlife	10	club, bar, etc.
	Shopping	11	shopping district, shops, etc.
	Destinations (not Vienna)	12	Austria, Hungary, etc.

In what follows, we first describe the methodology used to extrapolate the most significant aspects shaping online destination image for Vienna. We then provide an interpretation of results and conclude this paper with study limitations and discussion.

Methodology

To derive at factors shaping online destination image of Vienna, Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA) of articles in online travel communities is applied to identify attributes which are synonymously used with, or in the best case synonyms of, the target term (Vienna) (Deerwester et al., 1988). An advanced web crawler (more information available at www.weblyzard.com [May 20, 2009]; Scharl & Bauer 2004) is used to extract 38,482 documents about Vienna from 11 international travel communities and social travel guides (later referred to as communities). They were selected based on expert sampling from tourism professionals of the Austrian National Tourist Office, as well as experts from academia conducting research in the area of social media and IT & tourism (see list below). The documents were published between March 2008 and March 2009 to allow an analysis of the development and characteristics of online destination image over time.

www.travelblogs.com

www.igougo.com

www.mytripjournal.com

www.travelpod.com

www.travelblog.org

www.traveljournals.net

www.travbuddy.com

www.virtualtourist.com

www.tripadvisor.com

www.realtravel.com

www.43places.com

As of March 2008, Yahoo's search engine was used to search for articles about Austria within these communities. More precisely, the URLs (Uniform Resource Locators) of articles about cities in Austria were retrieved, serving as the basis for the crawling process in order to mirror the respective documents. Yahoo is one of the well-known global search engines like Google or MSN Search, which furthermore provides an API (application programming interface). It can be called automatically by programs to retrieve search results consisting of a page title, a short description as well as the link to the result's website. On a weekly basis, a script programmed by the researchers' searches for the keyword "vienna" and "Austria" in order to identify relevant documents, and extract URLs to prepare a focused crawl to draw the weekly sample.

In the next step, the webLyzard crawling agent (www.weblyzard.com, [May 20, 2009]) mirrors these retrieved URLs from the travel communities and extracts both visible and invisible textual information such as raw text, navigational components or scripting text (Scharl & Bauer 2004, Bauer & Scharl 2000). To derive at a cleaned data set it is necessary to pre-process the raw data in order to remove a document's invisible elements. Advanced parsing components remove redundant segments like news headlines and non-contextual navigational elements, which might bias the results (Scharl, Dickinger & Weichselbraun, 2008).

The present analysis is based on a general corpus of *667,983* community documents about Austria collected between March 2008 and March 2009. Table 2 shows the number of retrieved documents per quarter as well as the share of documents where the target term "Vienna" shows up at least once within the text.

The sum of the retrieved corpora, containing the keyword Vienna, consists of 38,482 documents in a travel context.

Table 2. Retrieved documents about travel related content within eleven communities

Timeframe | Samples	Number of Documents	Number of Documents about Vienna	Share
Quarter 1 (April – June 2008)	163,248 documents	18,119 documents	11.1%
Quarter 2 (July – September 2008)	168,111 documents	5,010 documents	2.98%
Quarter 3 (October – December 2008)	180,675 documents	6,090 documents	3.37%
Quarter 4 (January - March 2009)	155,949 documents	9,263 documents	5,94%
SUM	667,983 documents	38,482 documents	5,76%

In the next step Latent Semantic Analysis has been applied to find synonymously used expressions for the destination's name under study.LSA is a method for extracting and representing the contextual-usage meaning of words by statistical computations applied to a large corpus of text (Landauer & Dumais, 1997). The underlying idea is that the aggregate of all the word contexts, in which a given word does and does not appear, provides a set of mutual constraints that largely determine the similarity of meaning of words and sets of words to each other.

LSA is a fully automatic mathematical/statistical technique for extracting and inferring relations of expected contextual usage of words in passages of discourse. It is closely related to neural net models, but is based on singular value decomposition - a mathematical matrix decomposition technique closely akin to factor analysis that is applicable to text corpora approaching the volume of relevant language experienced by people (Landauer, Foltz, & Laham, 1998). However, it is not a traditional natural language processing or artificial intelligence program; it uses no humanly constructed dictionaries, knowledge bases, semantic networks, grammars, syntactic parsers, or morphologies, or the like. As its input it only takes raw text parsed into words defined as unique character strings and separated into meaningful passages or samples such as sentences or paragraphs. (Landauer *et al.*, 1998). Artificial intelligence ontologies, such as WordNet and CYC, start with intuitive human judgments about relations among words – the output of the mechanism LSA seeks to provide. (Landauer, 2007)

According to Landauer and Dumais (1996; 1997), LSA provides a method for determining the similarity of meaning of words and passages (synonyms or terms conveying a synonymity association) by analysis of large text corpora. However, words do not have meanings on their own. The key to similarity is not that two terms happen to occur (co-occur) in the same document: it is that two terms appear in the same context, that is they have very similar neighboring terms (Grossmann & Frieder, 2004; Landauer, 2007). Thus, solely because any two documents mention any two terms or more, this does not mean that there is a contextual relationship between terms as these might occur in documents discussing different topics. As a matter of fact, synonyms do not tend to co-occur together, but they tend to co-occur in the same context.

LSA models a passage as a simple linear equation, and a large corpus of text as a large set of simultaneous equations. To create an LSA representation of word meanings, it is necessary to have a large representative sample of the language experience of people that is typically in content and size to that experienced by people whose language is to be captured in the model. The current sample consists of 38,482 community articles meeting these criteria perfectly. It includes all natural exposures to, and uses of, language, whereby perceptual, physiological, and mind/brain contexts are also covered.

However, this also means, that it entails typos or expressions of concepts as they were phonetically mis/understood (Landauer, 2007), for instance Schönbrunn (the correct name) *versus* Schonbrun (the typo).

Successful simulation of human word and passage meaning can depend strongly on giving it a sufficiently large and representative text corpus to learn from. The analysis produces a set of vectors, one for each word and passage, each vector having typically 200-500 elements – factors or dimensions – in a "semantic space". The presented analysis reduces the high dimensional document/term vector space to a low dimensional latent semantic space. The parameters were chosen to end up with 25 dimensions in the latent semantic space since previous research proofed that good results can be achieved with this number of dimensions.

"The similarity of meaning of two words is measured as the cosine (or dot product or Euclidean distance, depending on the application) between the vectors, and the similarity of two passages (of any length) as the same measure on the sum or average of all its contained words." (Landauer, 2007)

Results

This section presents the results of applying Latent Semantic Analysis in order to find synonymously used terms for the keyword Vienna.

The results in table 3 are expressed as cosines (which for vectors are ordered in the same manner as correlation coefficients). Cosine values can range between -1 and 1, but in practice rarely go below 0. The results represent keywords occurring until the cutoff point of cos ≥ 0.7. The following table presents the top 10 synonymously used keywords for Vienna by quarter.

Table 3 Cosines per keyword and quarter (n = number of keywords where cos ≥ 0.7)

	Q1 | Apr-Jun 08		**Q2 | Jul-Sep 08**		**Q3 | Oct-Dec 08**		**Q4 | Jan-Mar 09**	
	cos	*Keyword*	*cos*	*keyword*	*cos*	*keyword*	*cos*	*keyword*
1	0.84	Belvedere	0.82	stephans	0.83	schonbrunn	0.84	belvedere
2	0.81	Schonbrunn	0.80	christkindlemart	0.75	stephans	0.81	schonbrunn
3	0.79	Stephans	0.80	schonbrunn	0.74	stephan's	0.79	stephans
4	0.77	Croquet	0.78	zentralfriedhof	0.73	hofburg	0.77	croquet
5	0.77	Kinderspitalgasse	0.77	zanoni	0.73	prater	0.77	kinderspitalgasse
6	0.77	Lenas	0.77	karlsplatz	0.73	silberkammer	0.77	lenas
7	0.77	Polostrasse	0.77	marx	0.72	volksgarten	0.77	polostrasse
8	0.76	Kolbeck	0.77	kunsthistorisches	0.72	hundertwasserhaus	0.76	kolbeck
9	0.74	Prater	0.76	karlplatz	0.72	christmasmarket	0.74	prater
10	0.74	Hundertwasserhaus	0.76	caramel	0.71	mq	0.74	hundertwasserhaus
		n = 59		*n = 66*		*n = 38*		*n = 60*

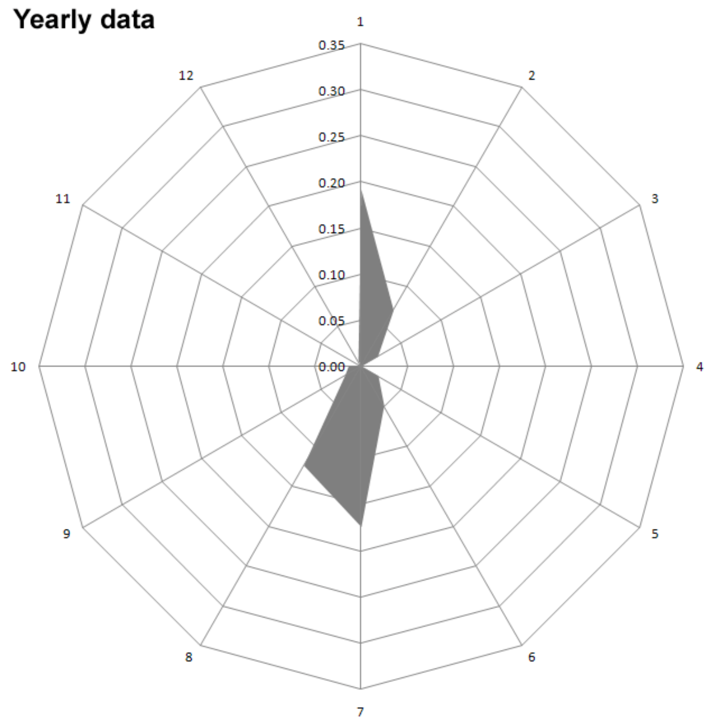
One can observe that cultural aspects (sights and attraction) like the Schönbrunn Palace, Belvedere, Stephansdome or the Hofburg rank highest in terms of similarity to the target term "Vienna". Overall a variety of similar concepts has been identified which not solely cover cultural aspects, but also geographic locations, accommodations, nightlife, shopping or restaurants.

Table 4. Significance ratio by category

UNWTO framework	Category	Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Heritage	1. Historical tangibles	0.19	0.34	0.32	0.32	0.34
	2. Historical intangibles	0.07	0.06	0.11	0.13	0.07
Contemporary Arts	3. Performing arts	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02
	4. Visual Arts	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00
	5. Plastic arts	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Creative industry	6. Creative industry	0.05	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.07
Non-cultural attractions	7. Streets, Addresses and Locations in Vienna	0.17	0.11	0.03	0.05	0.07
	8. Accommodation	0.12	0.07	0.04	0.04	0.09
	9. Restaurants	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.04	0.01
	10. Nightlife	0.01	0.01	0.05	0.00	0.01
	11. Shopping	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
	12. Destinations (not Vienna)	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00

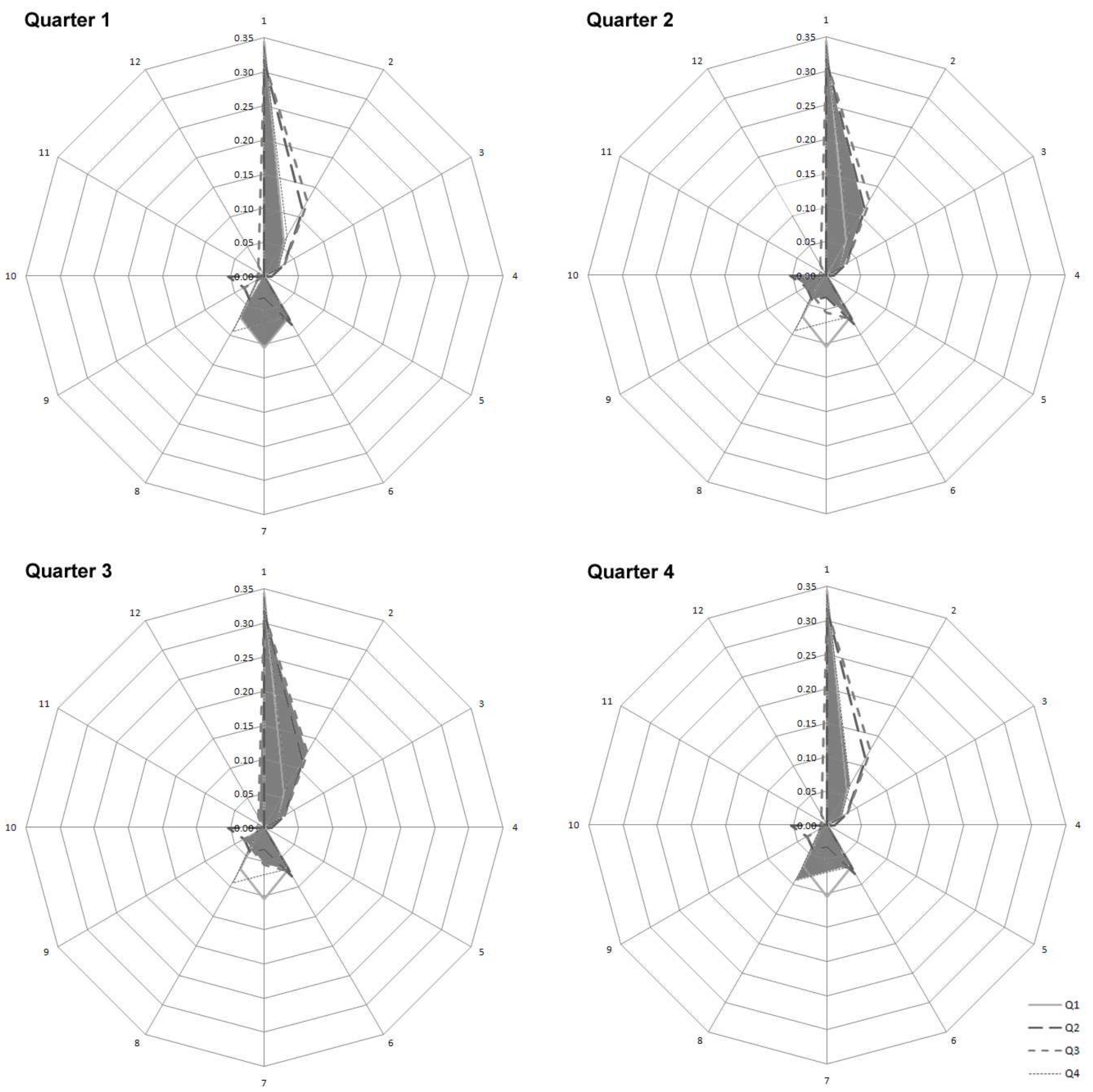
Table 4 shows the results of the applied categorization approach whereby numbers indicate the similarity of a category with the term Vienna, weighted by its occurring coverage within travel communities. The results represent image shaping categories of Vienna expressed by synonymously used words in the analyzed text. For example, in the yearly data, 0.19 in the category of historical tangibles indicates that in the analyzed text the word Vienna has been synonymously used for historical tangibles such as Stephansdome, Votivkirche, and Karlskirche. At the same time, this value indicates that more and higher ranked terms are included within this category. These category significance ratios are calculated by averaging keywords' cosines values within each category. To avoid size effects in comparing different corpora (e.g. yearly or quarterly), the value is weighted by the relative size of the category within the corresponding corpus.

Figure 2. Distribution of yearly significance ratios by 12 categories



The yearly data results (see figure 2) reveal that Vienna is mostly associated with its historical heritage. Individuals that participate in online communication regarding Vienna are predominantly reporting about historical sights and attractions (category 1) to see in Vienna. One of the most common terms that came up in our analysis was the palace of Schönbrunn, which is one of the most famous palaces in Vienna, followed by Belvedere, and Stephansdom. The second most significant category are 'locations' in Vienna (category 7), which may be the result of travelers asking for or reporting the address of some of the attractions or trying to find the exact location of hotels. The following third most significant category was accommodations (category 8) and it included hotel names located in Vienna. The other significant categories for a whole year were historical intangibles such as "Christkindelmarkt" (Christmas market), "Waltz", and "Heuriger" (Viennese winery). Followed by 'creative industries' where community members identify the "Museums Quartier" as meaningful attraction. This attraction includes several museums, coffee shops, restaurants, concert halls, and museum shops. "Museums Quartier" is more than the museums it has, it is rather a symbol of Vienna's cultural modernity. The Museums Quartier is an umbrella which reunites 40 small-and medium sized art-related businesses, with an emphasis on fashion, design and culture in general. Therefore, Museums Quartier was not included in the tangible historical category. Performing arts, plastic arts, restaurants, night life and other destinations were the other significant categories in our analysis.

Figure 3. Distribution of quarterly significance ratios by 12 categories



Quarter 1: April – June 2008; Quarter 2: July – September 2008; Quarter 3: October – December 2008; Quarter 4: January – March 2009

When we look at the quarterly data (see figure 3), the results indicate that LSA identifies the category of "historical tangibles" as most synonymously used for all of the four quarters. This means that when individuals write about Vienna they use terms identifying historical heritage of the city as synonyms for Vienna itself. It can be said that Vienna is intrinsically tied to its historical heritage. This heritage includes the "Schönbrunn Palace", "Hofburg Palace", "Stephansdome", "Belvedere" and "Votivkirche" which are well known palaces and churches regarded as top tourism attractions in Vienna. 'Historical intangibles' became more significant in the second and third quarters and it starts losing its momentum in the last quarter. These include "Christkindelmarkt" (christmas market), traditional Viennese food (Schnitzel), classical music composers (Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms), traditional Viennese winery (Heuriger), and people who had an impact on Austria such as the

Habsburgs (the last Austrian dynasty), Sissi (one of the most beloved queens of Austria), Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud.

Although its significance value did not change over time ‘performing arts’ was another significantly important category in our analysis. It has always been closely related to Vienna. However, its importance among the cultural categories stayed the same except for the last quarter. In the last quarter especially imPulsTanz, Vienna’s International Dance festival, was an important keyword that was included in this category and its significance was more important for that quarter than it was for the previous quarters.

“Visual arts” was not a significant category in none of the performed analyses. “Plastic arts” was only significant in the overall yearly data, in which porcelain (Augarten Manufactury, porcelain) was an important keyword. The ‘Creative industries’ category was consistently tied to the destination and its significance value was one of the highest among each of the quarters. Futhermore, contemporary architecture was included in this category and the famous Hundertwasser house was mentioned many times synonymously for Vienna. Street names and districts in the city were mostly significant in the yearly analysis and the first quarter and lost its importance in the following quarters. This is related to the fact that the names in this category were associated with hotels and the accommodation category had relatively the same significance value in the corresponding quarter results. ‘Accommodations’ category had the second highest significance value in the yearly and the first quarter, and although in the second and third quarter its significance value decreased, it increased in the last quarter again. However, the reason for this maybe the result of type of travelers visiting Vienna at different times, for example travelers that have purchased a package tour may not be looking for accommodation related information, on the other hand independent travelers may need more information on this subject.

Restaurants, nightlife, and shopping categories were the other significant categories; however their significance were relatively lower than the other categories. This does not mean that the travelers who visited Vienna are not interested in shopping or restaurants, but that these activities didn’t have to be published online.

Overall, the results show that Vienna as a travel destination is mostly associated with its historical heritage and culture. Cultural aspects include all the museums, different types of arts (e.g. performance, plastic arts), and contemporary architecture. Other than these aspects, accommodations, restaurants, nightlife, and shopping were other significantly important categories. The tangible heritage of the past plays a major role, both in terms of relevance and stability over time. Contemporary art and intangible cultural factors are also significant aspects shaping Vienna’s online image. As distinctive feature, the weight of these last factors is subject to fluctuations over time, and is more incisive in specific periods of the year. Limited-in-time events, such as performances, are significantly connected with the name of the destination, with a short temporal effect.

Discussion

The results offer a few key points for discussion on online image characteristics.

Not surprisingly, the cultural component of a city destination’s offer is the most relevant in tourism related discussions online; a clear distinction can be made between heritage and contemporary forms of art, the former one being more relevant and stable over time. This could be explained by the fact that the traditional heritage attracts a larger variety of visitors’ segments, such as package groups, school trips and independent travelers, acquiring more visibility in the web.

The results of the quarterly analysis open up to interesting inquiries concerning the effect of limited-in-time events on the overall destination image. In our study, contemporary forms of art and events produce fluctuations of the destination profile: for Vienna, the association with tradition and classical culture is more relevant in the second half of the year from July to December (quarters 2 and 3). Many events occurring in the city for a short period were not mentioned enough in the analyzed documents to be have a significant effect on the Vienna's image.

Selecting keywords by the means of LSA allows capturing new topics on the web. Overall, the significant, but less relevant attributes of online destination image can be understood as the emerging signals of destination's potential profile. Some of these aspects will probably consolidate over time, and grow in importance, as for instance the creative industries, supported by the destination as a whole. The fact that this industry is already present in tourism related blogs makes this investment attractive not only for the socio-economic development of Vienna, but also as a factor capable to attract more visitors. For instance, the presence, among the significant keywords, of the dance festival InPulsTanz and not of the traditional Opera Ball, may already be an expression of change.

Different from traditional image surveys, online studies are more sensitive to changes of image attributes over time. Our study demonstrates that this is the case for seasonal destination-determined agents, such as events and exhibitions, as well as for other tourism-services, such as accommodation and clubbing. The increased presence of cultural intangible attributes, such as classical music composers (Quarter 2) and folkloristic aspects (Quarter 3), renders a more realistic picture of visitors' "seasonal" perception of the destination, an aspect which is particularly relevant for cities, whereby repeated visitors typically represent a relevant segment.

Research Limitations

A few limitations concerning the methodology of analysis have to be acknowledged. First, it is important to mention that LSA is not a complete theory of language or meaning. It does not take into account word order by which the meaning of sentences or the implications of sentence and paragraph order are altered. Without human help, it often does not adequately represent the variability of meanings, conveyed by predication, anaphora, metaphor, modification, attachment, quantification, logical or mathematical propositions, or negations. In line with of McEnery and Wilson (1996) and Biber, Conrad and Reppen (1998) about co-occurrence analysis, also LSA lacks local context which limits the explanatory power of the applied analyses due to the fact, that the author's attitude is neglected. Hence LSA, such as the majority of alternative natural language processing approaches, does not cover all aspects of language (Landauer *et. al*, 2007).

The content analysis performed in order to compensate LSA incapability to assess word's meaning may also present limitations in the classification. Despite the descriptive care with which the framework for the definition of culture, and the classification of cultural attractions, has been done, the codification process may have been affected by subjective interpretation. The effect independent of coding, used to allow for different interpretation, may be weakened by the fact that the authors were aware of the aim of the coding.

This study focused on one destination only, however future research can use LSA to compare different destinations at different times of the year. This may reveal more about the destination image of each destination as well as the strengths of them. Also, LSA can be used to evaluate the destination marketing efforts or visitor satisfaction by monitoring destination related articles in blogs and online communities.

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INNOVATION IN EVENT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES EVENT AS A LEVERAGE OF CITIES' PROMOTION

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Abstract

On the current hypercompetitive panorama, few cities seem to have been managed to attract national and international attention as a result of marketing actions. In this field, events could be a strong attractive factor for cities where they take place. Particularly, the purpose of the paper is trying to see when and under which conditions an event can become a real tourist attractive factor for a destination. Moreover, the research aims at verifying if the planned elements of event management and marketing, for a city as a destination, are expression of a real event strategy, able to promote a tourist destination. The empirical part will focus on a longitudinal case study analysis, in order to get to a scientific advance on the field and to managerial implications, useful both for events planners and tourist firms and for Institutional leaders (Gambetti, 2003).

Keywords: innovation; event strategy; destination development; destination marketing.

Introduction and Research Methodology.

In tourism industry, in the latest decades, the interest referring to events has been continuously increasing both at demand and offer level. Nowadays, events are considered as concrete business activities. Probably, the relatively recent interest in scientific terms, compared with other economical sectors, is due to the fact that events have generally been more submitted to empirical analysis rather than to theoretical studies, especially in cases of tourism events. On the other hand, the need for scientific approach is linked to the relevance which events are playing in tourism destination development (Bramwell, Rawding, 1994).

Particularly, this research aims at analyzing a possible innovative approach in event management and marketing. Moreover, many cities and destinations are actually in a maturity phase of their lifecycle and their offer can just be renewed through events like festivals and important exhibitions. The paper highlights that performing arts and other festivals can be an important attractive factors for the destination where they take place and can be now defined a part of worldwide tourism phenomenon.

The explosion in festival numbers is multifaceted in cause, ranging from supply factors (such as cultural planning, tourism development, and civic re-positioning), to demand factors (such as serious leisure, lifestyle sampling, socialization needs, and the desire for creative and “authentic” experiences by some market segments). In this perspective, events play a number of significant roles for a whole region. In the paper, we will first go through the analysis of the main literature on event management field (Bramwell, 1997; Getz, 1992, 1993, 1997, 1998, 2001; Goldblatt, 1997, 1998, 2002, 2004; Watt, 1998). Subsequently, we try to verify how and when an “event” can become a real attractive factor for a tourist destination, contributing to destination’s launch and/or market repositioning. We therefore try to verify, thorough Resource-Based-Theory (RBT), when an event can be strategic for a destination, that is if it can be a source of destination’s sustainable competitive advantage and what is the role of event innovation in this process.

The Main Literature on Event Management.

Event industry, as stated, is rapidly developing and becoming a powerful weapon, available for contemporary destination marketers to compete. In this sense, event can be reached and interpreted as a specific tourism business. Moreover, the veins of research in reference are of different typologies, moving from the main impacts of the event on the hosting destination to organizational core activities. Particularly, the first field concerns the convergences of a lot of sciences consisting in anthropology, history, geography, sociology. Meanwhile, organizational activities concern more strictly to the business and management field of research.

In this direction, a growing interest exists in what Getz (1993) highlights as “unique leisure and cultural experiences, powerful travel motivators and facilitators of community pride and authenticity”, especially with events based on inherent indigenous values. Events play a number of significant roles in a town or region. Getz (1997) identifies these as “attractions, image makers, animators of static attractions and catalysts for further development, and as tools to promote a brand identity of a place”. They can link landscape to lifestyle in the mind of potential tourists. This is true, also because “a special event is recognizable in a specific time for the intentions and rituals able to satisfy needs” (Goldblatt, 1997). Moreover, the involvement of local people results one of the most important and preliminary elements in order to give a definition of an event, because this is modelled around the needs erased from community and the final results depend also on the community. Properly for the strong interconnection with local people that, according with Goldblatt, Allen *et al.*(1999) speak about “specific rituals …to celebrate special occasions”. The dimension of social connection is remarked also by Van Der Wagen (2001).

This theoretical vein tends to identify all involved stakeholders in terms of social embeddedness (Granovetter, 1973), which refers to how closely an event is connected with the community which hosts it. So, the aim is that of building those connections as two-way relationships: mutually beneficial partnerships so that the event and the community are equal stakeholders and beneficiaries in a real collaborative project. In this perspective, the stakeholders, connected to an event, can be conceived as social capital (Putnam, 1993, 2000), which “refers to features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, which can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions.”

Another direction of analysis goes towards the different typologies of impacts an event can generate in the hosting destination. Among these aspects, the economical type is one of the most analyzed by literature (Crompton, McKay, 1994), especially because it could be a determinant factor for public and private stakeholders about funding. So, an event generates *multipliers* (Allen, Harris, Jago, Veal, 2000; Ferrari, 2002; Getz, 2005) in different sectors of local economy. They are of different typologies: *direct*, as an immediate consequence of the event, like the revenue from the entrance ticket or from the souvenirs sell, the expenses connected with the stay in the destination; *indirect*, as the result of the event in economic sectors (commercial activities, cultural sites, etc.); *induced*, as an increase of to local income and/or job. In this way, the original direct effect can be multiplied by indirect and induced effects.

The nature of this impact is directly connected to political decisions and priorities because of mobilization of public and local resources. In these terms, an event becomes an aspect of government policy which may heighten its controversial nature (Hiller, 1998). Increasingly, policy is using events as a mean of serving its objectives, from delivering tourists, regenerating communities and celebrating moments in time to arousing civic pride, inspiring the arts and stimulating regional economies (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris, McDonnell, 2006). As social representative, political part has the need to balance economic and social goals. This issue is essential in a sustainable perspective where event is strongly connected to the host community (Murphy, 1985; Getz, 1994; Gursoy, Jurowski, Uysal, 2002; Hinch, 1994; Akis, Peristianis, Warner, 1996; Delamere, 2001; Xiao, Smith, 2004).

In fact, tourism has a strong impact on a destination environment, also for the increased tourist flows. Moreover, events need specific services and infrastructures, or even represent the occasion to collect funds to build infrastructures useful for local destination system (Burns, Hatch, Mules, 1986). Investments could have both positive and negative reflexes on a hosting destination in terms of created value and regeneration of local resources. Particularly, in this vein of research Sherwood, Jago and Deery (2004) move towards an evaluation of the environmental impacts of the event through triple bottom line (TBL) analysis which includes the impact of events on the quality of life of the host community. Especially, through the possibility offered by model to compare and contrast different events, the event stakeholders can be helped in the decision-making process about which events merit support.

Part of the literature distinguishes event tourism from event management (among researchers: Di Cesare, 1995; Getz, 1997, 2005). In this direction, this paper’s objective is properly that to evaluate how a planned event in resource based theory perspective can generate long lasting value for the hosting destination in tourists terms. Events can help the destination to define and achieve its own vision (Ritchie, Crouch, 2003; Getz, 2005). In order to evaluate tourist impact of an event in the hosting destination many models are defined. Among these, an interesting one is TIAS (*Tourism Impact Attitude Scale*), developed by Lankford and Howard (1994) to analyze the tourism development effect on a destination, usable also to evaluate the event tourism on hosting location. Particularly, this standardized scale analyzes some independent variables, like the duration of the event and the involvement of local community, the communication level and the contact level with audience. In this sense, it is important to underline that tourism is defined as the experience and consumption of a place. In this direction, researchers are giving importance to the effects of events on a destination image (Della Corte, Micera, 2007), as Hall affirms: “hallmark events may be regarded as the image makers of modern tourism” (Hall, 1992). Hiller (1989, 1998) and Ritchie, and Smith (1991) were the first to investigate this field of research but nowadays there has been an increase in the number of studies referring to the image impact (Foley, 1991; Roche, 1994, 2000). A still lack of consideration is about the long lasting effects of destination image deriving from an event. In this meaning, places obtaining distinctiveness as places to go have to be created: a particular festival also provides a tool for interpretation of place (Meethan, 1996). That is the reason why some popular events are located in wonderful or spectacular locations. This can be through the naming of the event, through a visual identification with the landscape so that the “appearance makes the location immediately identifiable for tourists” (Derrett, 2004). As a result of this power, event determines a media impact which must be planned strategically in order to avoid image distortion and damage for the hosting destination.

In organizational field, research is in continuous evolution in a “study on the job” process (Bramwell,1977; Getz, 2005; Higham, 2005), with attention to the resources of the destination and the event, the life’s cycle of the destination linked to that of event, the strategies, especially in the perspective marketing terms (Della Corte, 2009) and the achievement through the event of a sustainable competitive advantage for the destination (Barney, Della Corte, Sciarelli M., 2006). Considering an event as a stakeholders system, many researchers developed analysis of relationships among actors involved at various levels towards a real network based on cooperation (among the others: Long, 2000; Larson, Wikstrom, 2001; Larson, 2002; Getz, Andersson, Larson, 2007). A more specific focus about the possibility to use the media impact to attract tourist flows in the hosting destination is rather recent instance, developed especially in some events, like sport events (Mossberg, 2000; Chalip, Green, Hill, 2003; Getz, Fairley, 2004; Hede, 2005; Li, Vogelsong, 2005; Ritchie, Sanders, Mules, 2006).

Starting from this theoretical framework, and through the lenses of the literature on innovation systems (Freeman 1987; Carlsson, Stankiewicz, 1991; Lundvall, 1992; Nelson, 1993; Edquist, 1997; Malerba, 2002), Larsen (2004) has elaborated a modes and nodes innovation model, which can be applied to event tourism to evaluate the innovative management. In fact, modes innovation is referring specifically to activities and elements of an event, meanwhile the nodes innovation is about the new way of interaction between the stakeholders involved in an event. Therefore, innovation in event tourism management is not in the narrow sense of R&D development, but in the processes influenced also by external conditions of the contest. In this context, also the approach of the local policy of the hosting destination can be analyzed under the nodes innovation. We propose an analysis based on a specific model, which is the elaboration of Larsen’s.

Event Management and Destination Development.

Countries and cities are competing worldwide. To meet tourism, business and population objectives, destination managers are now applying event management principals, associates with destination marketing, to determine a sustainable tourism development. This is possible only through a strategic analysis of destination and event resources, in the resource based theory perspective.

The Resource Based Theory Perspective

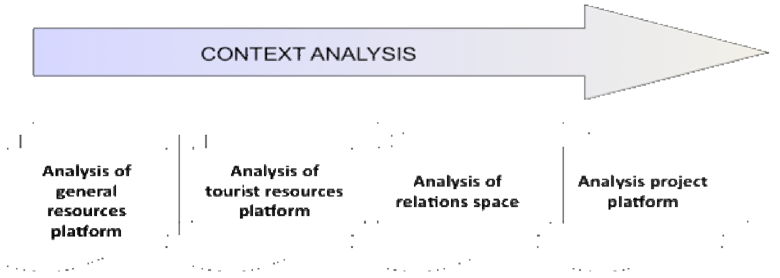
Resource-based theory (Barney 1991, 2006) aims at verifying possible sources of sustainable competitive advantage for firms. Particularly, these *sources* are *resources*, both tangible and intangible. Moreover, there are two fundamental assumptions to gain competitiveness: resource heterogeneity (a firm is a bundle of resources and different firms possess different bundles) and resource immobility (some of these resources are either very costly to copy or inelastic in supply). In this perspective, abnormal rents can be earned from resources to the extent that they are: *Valuable*, allowing the firm to exploit opportunities or neutralize threats in its external environment; *Rare*, valuable firm resources possessed by large numbers of competing firms cannot be sources of either competitive advantage or sustainable competitive advantage; imperfectly *Imitable*, since certain isolation mechanisms are determined by the fact that resources are difficult to imitate because of unique historical conditions, of casual ambiguity, of social complexity or of possession of licenses, patents or registered trademarks; *Organized*, if opportunely implemented in the firm's organization in order to be concretely used. The resources which positively answer to all variables are strategic and can generate a sustainable competitive advantage.

The essential elements of the resource-based view of the firm are the firm's key resources and capabilities, and the role of management in converting these resources into positions of sustainable competitive advantage leading to superior performance in the marketplace. Through its insights into the nature of competitive advantage, RBT has already made an important contribution to the field of strategic marketing. It helps to explain why some resources are more advantage-generating than others and also why resource asymmetries and consequent competitive advantages persist even in conditions of open competition. Moreover, it also recognises the role of industry effects in observed performance levels which is evident in the ongoing debate on the relative importance of both firm and industry factors. RBT has also the potential to influence significantly strategic marketing.

Generally, the starting point of strategic marketing analysis is based on the exam of the firm's strengths/weaknesses, as well as the context's opportunities/threats, as part of a broader SWOT analysis. RBT provides a conceptually grounded framework for assessing strengths and weaknesses and enables strengths or weaknesses to be examined in terms of the criteria for establishing sustainable competitive advantage.

With specific reference to event management, a complete context analysis can be developed in four steps as in the figure below.

Figure 1. Tourist context analysis process of event

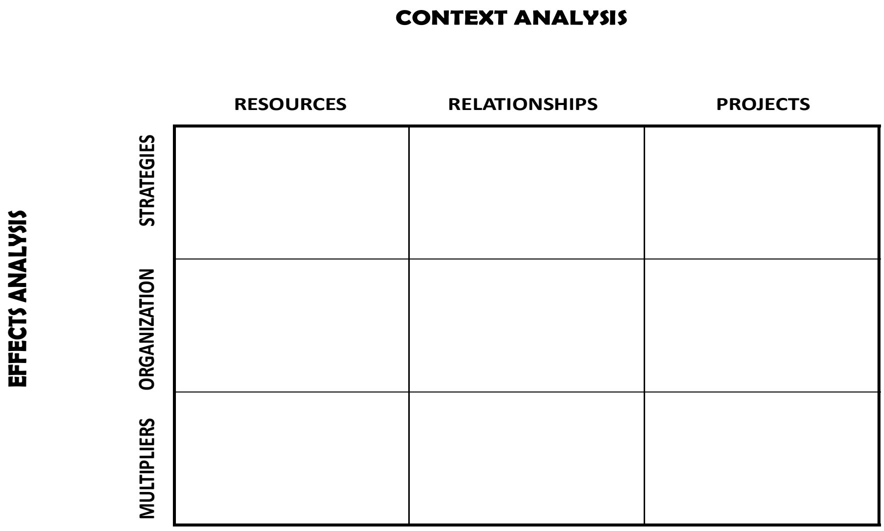


Source: elaboration from Rispoli, 2001.

In this direction, the creation of formal or informal linkages between the different event stakeholders is the catalyzing of changes in the territory organization.

An analysis model, which connects all the mentioned variables, allows to relate the dynamics of tourist firms and public institutions with the planned event and this with the reference context. So moving from RBT, an influence event/context matrix can be build (*see* the figure 2). The horizontal axis presents the results of hosting context analysis, according to three perspectives: existing resources, relationships and projects. The vertical axis presents the results of event effects under a strategic, organizational and multipliers view.

Figure 2. Influence matrix for tourist context analysis of an event



Source: elaboration from Rispoli, 2001.

All the squares of the matrix give information on the strategic potential of the event in reference to the hosting destination. Particularly, in resource based perspective, resources represent the strongest influence elements for the destination and for the event. In fact, if an event is organized around strategic resources it will generate positive effects in tourist terms. In event overview, the efficient and effective organization of those resources allows the hosting destination to pursue many objectives in the short and in the long run, as shown in the following table.

Table 1. Objectives of a destination through events

SHORT TERM	MEDIUM/LONG TERM
- Improvement of destination image; - Increase of national/international tourist flows; - Increase of tourist expenditure; - Improve of tourist destination resources' attraction; - Decrease of seasonality in demand; - Higher customer satisfaction and positive world of mouth; - Multiplier effects.	- Improvement of destination image; - Conversion or new position of destination image; - Increase of destination fame; - Increase of tourist flows; - Decrease of seasonality in demand; - Development and improvement of infrastructures, services and public works; - Improvement of productivity; - Valorisation and conservation of destination cultural and artistic heritage; - Direct and induced multiplier effects; - Lengthening of the destination life' cycle.

Source: elaboration from Ferrari S., 2002.

The event as a system

In a hypercompetitive context (D'Aveni, 1995, 1998; Della Corte, Sciarelli, 2003; Grant, Baden Fuller, 2002; Della Corte, Sciarelli, Celiento, 2003), the event must be considered as an economical and social system which involves many interacting actors of different sectors. In stakeholder theory overview (Freeman, 1984), the event is a stakeholders system and has to ensure the right balance between economical and other objectives, especially referring to the value creation. Moreover, a distinction among stakeholders exists: *primary* ones, which have a formal relationships with event organizer; *secondary* ones, all the others. In this field, the planning activities of an event have to include an *event stakeholder relationship* (Cherubini, Iasevoli, 2005) which indicates different methodological and interpretative approaches, such as systemic and inter-systemic interactions and relationships between all the actors.

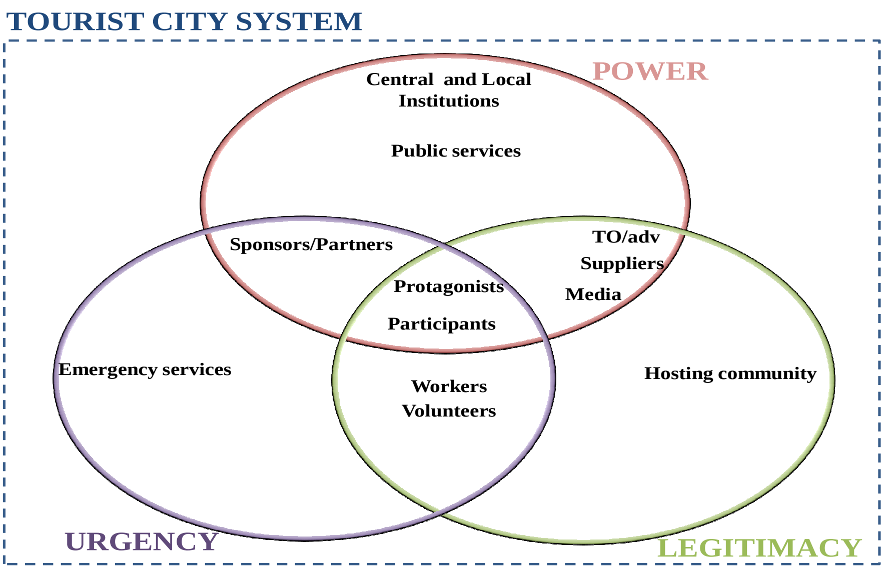
Particularly, according to Reid and Arcodia (2002), event stakeholders are "those groups which can either influence or be influenced by the event implementation." Moreover, without the primary stakeholders, the event doesn't exist, meanwhile the secondary stakeholders are not directly involved in the event but they can have either a positive or a negative impact on the event. Applying this perspective to city as tourist destination and event host, the relationships net can transform the dimension of the city, making it *global* (Montanari, 2002). So, the event strategy represents a part of city marketing towards tourism through a city strategy of differentiation and communication city policy in order to create relationships.

As stated before, the product event has several stakeholders, which can help the organisation to bring success to the event. Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) claimed that the main characteristics for determining the relationship between the event and stakeholders are:

- *power*: it can be defined as "the relationship among social actors, in which social actor A can choose that social actor B have to do something which it will never have done";
- *legitimacy*: it can be defined as a "general perception or assumption that the actions within a socially constructed system of rules values, values, beliefs and definitions";
- *urgency*: it can be defined as "the extent to which the *stakeholders* require immediate attention".

All this is represents the measure to distinguish the *stakeholders* from the *non-stakeholders:* in fact, the determination of membership of the first category is resident in the possession at least of one of these categories, the hierarchy. It is possible to distinguish: *dormant stakeholders* (they just have power); *discretionary stakeholders* (they just have legitimacy); *demanding stakeholders*, (they just have urgency); *dominant stakeholders* (they have both power and legitimacy); *dependent stakeholders* (they have both urgency and legitimacy); *dangerous stakeholders* (they have both power and urgency); *definitive stakeholders* (they have all the evidenced characteristics) (figure 3).

Figure 3. Typologies of event stakeholders



Source :elaboration from Mitchell, Agle, Wood (1997); Sciarelli S. (2004).

The event is then a collector of different interests, a tool for consensus creation which, like other resources, is a tool to achieve a competitive advantage. Furthermore, in RBT perspective, the creation of a system is based on interests' sharing and above all on resources' sharing as well as new and specific resources' generation. This creates a system of values, which outlines the event as a network of relations.

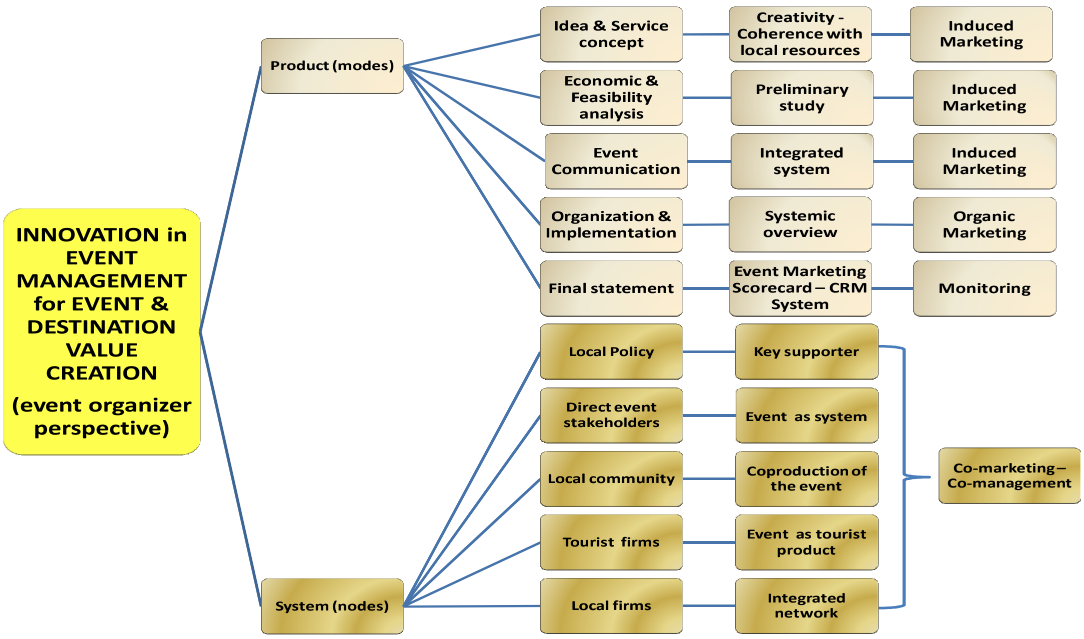
Event competitive strategies: the role of innovation

One of the main features of an event is surely the complexity which determines the need of a systemic approach. In order to analyze the different phases, moving from event idea up to monitoring, event management is necessarily proposing a "global management", able to give roles and tools, indicate duties and responsibilities, facilitate the monitoring towards continuous improvement (Goldblatt, 2004). In this direction, event management is a managerial system aimed at organizing strategically the resources in order to address them towards a dimension of four levels: *scope*, as the motive of organizing an event; *time*, as the timing and planning of all activities; *costs*, as a parameter of reference in order to calibrate the others. Moreover, these three components have to face a fundamental issue: *quality* which can be considered the linkage and the eschatological aim of all the activities foreseen in an event. So, event management as strategy for a tourist destination has to consider contemporarily the brand of the event as a possible catalyzing of brand destination, the main targets and the offer system of the hosting destination, in order to develop an event as a complex tourist product.

Considering the significant consequences deriving from an event, the importance of an accurate strategic planning is due in order to create value for the hosting destination and the event itself. In a systemic overview, value creation coincides with all stakeholders satisfaction, directly and indirectly involved in the event. In this terms, in event management innovation can be considered as a strategy, playing a key role in value creation process. An event creates value if it is sustainable under three dimensions which influence the tourist success of the hosting destination: economical (success in the competitive market), social (with legitimacy obtained by local community) and environmental (efficient and effective use of available resources - Institute of Social and Ethical Account Ability – ISEA) one. An event and a hosting destination, which work together in a stakeholder network, move along a path of innovation. Thus value creation through innovation becomes a strategic objective coherently with destination attraction aims.

In fact, at this point of our discussion, it seems useful to outline a scheme clarifying the main elements composing event innovation (figure 4).

Figure 4. The role of innovation in event management.



Source: our reworking

As depicted in figure 4, innovation operates at two levels. In fact, in the organizer perspective, innovation for value creation is both at product (modes) and at system level (nodes).

More specifically, it can be said that at the product level, all the phases of event planning are involved in, playing a strategic role for the value creation. From idea and service concept up to monitoring, innovation can become a strategy for achieving a competitive sustainable advantage.

An important feature about innovation at product level is connected to tourist marketing strategies. In fact, in marketing plans, the event idea, the service concept, the economic and feasibility analysis as well as the integrated communication are at induced marketing level. In this step, event (and destination) image and brand represent virtual elements on which tourist takes decisions about his/her participation, travelling toward the hosting destination. Meanwhile, the organization and the implementation stage represent the supply of the event and are mainly connected with the organic level of marketing, where customer satisfaction and possible retention are generated (Della Corte, 2009). The two levels are connected through the final statement of monitoring, in order to verify the efficiency and the effectiveness of the realized event.

Event innovation at system level (nodes) is realized moving from a dynamic perspective of the hosting destination as an open system (Batty, 2000; Hall, 2000), where all the stakeholders are analyzed. The aim is that to create an event stakeholders' network developing three levels of analysis (Stokes, 2005): relationships within the network; the actors of the network and the implication for event management. In the first perspective, all the connections between involved event stakeholders influence the final results of the organization. At the second level, the analysis is about the position of the actors in the system which can be divided in three categories (Stokes, 2005): organization actors, resources actors and local community (Holmlund, Tomroos, 1997). Both the aspects drive towards the definition of overall network structure.

Even if the events are often organized by independent firms or agencies, their increasing importance in the tourist terms have determined the birth of public organizer agencies. This aims at focusing on relevant events and helping local policy to invest rightly (Getz, 1997; Stoke, 2005).

In order to support tourism development, an event should be included in each level of touristic chain: it is not an isolated phenomenon but it becomes an integral part of tourist product and in some cases it even represents the core product.

Innovation and the 7 marketing policies

Event strategy towards innovation for value creation follows the approach of event marketing. In this direction, event marketing can be defined as the capability to keep in contact tourists and event attendances, creating a product able to match their needs and to create a communication coherent with event aims (Hall, 1989).

The innovation can also add value with reference to marketing policies, considering the actual competitive market in tourism. In this direction, apart from the coded 4P (product, price, promotion, and placement) at induced marketing level, 3 policies (servicescape, relations and quality, and productivity) exist at organic marketing level (Della Corte, 2009, chapter 2).

Particularly, a theoretical definition of event typologies is not statically fixed but in continuous evolution, determined by the empirical practice. Moreover, the classification used in the present research is not the only one existing in the literature. So, according to Watt (2001) innovation, as a relevant aspect of events, requires innovation also in the system's definition. In this direction, theory and practice are strongly linked, especially in marketing perspective: aims and typologies work together in a cycle of reciprocal influences.

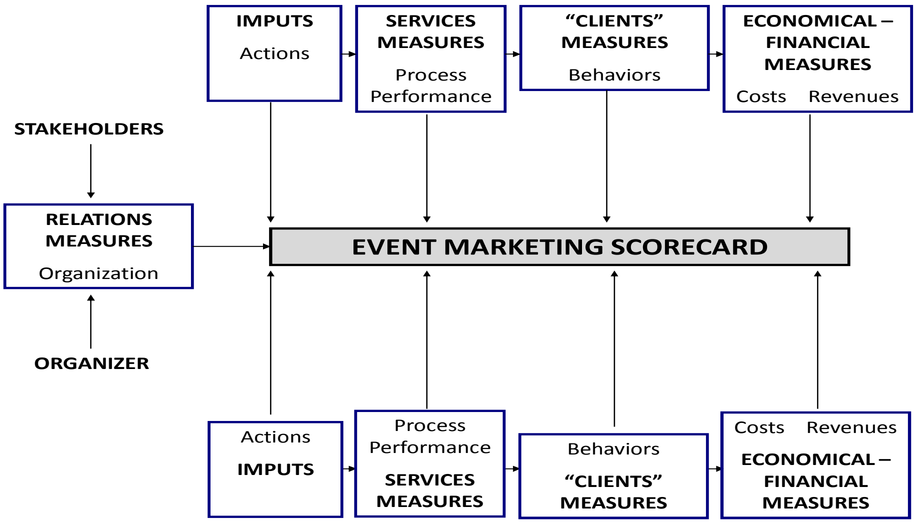
About pricing, in order to attract tourists, even if it depends on the nature of the event, it often happens that admittance is free or just a quite symbolic fee is required. In such cases, costs' coverage is carried out by grants or sponsorship in the fundraising overview.

The promotion of an event in a tourist strategy overview is strictly linked to planned promotion of the hosting destination using the same tools. Particularly, according with tourist policy, more often destinations are planning events calendars in order to develop an exact program. Moreover, this strategy aims at developing a less strong seasonality and at completing the tourist offer system in order to a complex and variegate product-destination.

The placing for an event is at about two levels. One is referring to event location as the place where the event takes place. Meanwhile, the other is about the event as a complex tourist product determined by a development of a package around the event.

At organic level, the servicescape coincides with exact location as structure selected for the event. The relation and quality for the event represent an innate characteristic of an event as a tourist strategy. About the productivity, for event in tourist overview, the main element is referring to increase of flows and customer satisfaction as a leverage for customer retention and destination loyalty. In order to this, induced and organic marketing are connected by the monitoring phase, through customer relationship management, in order to evaluate the performances, and event marketing scorecard (Cherubini, Iasevoli, 2006). Particularly, the second tool analyses the external context, the target as need-holders to be satisfied, the marketing decision about the event and the different impacts of the event in order to create a positive knowledge of information (figure 5).

Figure 5. Event Marketing Scorecard



Source: Cherubini S., Iasevoli G., 2005.

The event as image-maker and product

Destination image represents a key asset in tourist destination development and promotion because it is presumed to have direct consequences for variables such as the satisfaction felt by the tourist or loyalty to the tourism destination. Loyalty is a concept related closely to customer satisfaction, and there is even a consensus that a high degree of satisfaction results in loyal customers. This makes loyalty the central concept of marketing (Petrick, Backman 2002; Baker, Crompton, 2000, Bign´e *et al*. 2001) and any discussion of it must take into account the elements involved in the process of its formation, such as customer satisfaction and brand image.

In this way, the publicity which events can generate for a community can have a great impact upon image and identity of the community but also assist with creating an appealing authenticity. The image generated by the event can position a destination in the mind of visitors and motivate them to stay longer.

Moreover, the growing competition between cities at both national and international levels gives rise to a series of marketing strategies for cities, aiming at attracting resources and visitors, as well as residents, and to improve employment and investment levels in urban areas (Van den Berg, Braun, Otgaar, 2000). In this direction, events should be firmly linked to the image of the city hosting them, and if possible over the years should become a clear symbol and an essential component of image and offer of that city.

According to the main aim of our research, events, as underlined by Getz (1999), may act as *image-makers* through their role of forming destination image, much due to the media attention and publicity it attracts in relation to the event. Images associated with events can be transferred to the host community or destination, leading tourist policy to include increasingly events explicitly in their destination positioning or branding strategies.

By analyzing, the event on this point of view, it emerges that it can led the destination achieving a sustained competitive advantage, becoming a promotional tool or even more a tool of destination image creation.

More detailed, crossing the image of the host place with which of the complex product "event", it comes out the following scheme.

Figure 6. Destination image and event image

DESTINATION IMAGE

EVENT IMAGE	NEGATIVE	POSITIVE
POSITIVE	*1st square:* Change of destination image coherently with event image	*2nd square:* Reinforcement
NEGATIVE	*3rd square:* **COHERENT PRODUCT :** Change of destination and event offer **NO COHERENT PRODUCT :** Change of event and of destination and event communication	*4th square:* **COHERENT PRODUCT :** Change of communication **NO COHERENT PRODUCT :** Change of event

Source : elaboration from Casarin, 1996.

In this optic, event can be created and interpreted as *tourism product* which can attract people to visit a specific destination, becoming pull factors for potential tourists.

According to all the issues highlighted in the previous section, events have to be accompanied by the so-called "event strategy" and creation of an integrated network in order to become not only more competitive in the market but, above all, to represent the right tool for cities' promotion.

Therefore, our specific aim is to understand how event can generate a sustainable competitive advantage and become a significant attractive factor for the whole destination where they are located. This objective, as stated at the beginning, requires an innovation process.

These previous elements are all existing in the case study analysed in follow section, that represents a first empirical test of our work's framework.

Findings: Edinburgh International Festival.

A underlined in the previous sections of this research, events, to be considered attractive factors for a destination, have to point out innovative elements depicturing both product and system innovation. In this paragraph, which represents the empirical part of the research, we went examining a successful case in European area. At the methodological level, the case of *International Edinburgh Festival* has been elaborated through the analysis of website and promotional supports and interviews to a group of experts, more in detail, to two important figures for the festival development: the two directors of the two festivals which are proposed during the International Festival. These interviews have been useful to outline the main strategies applied by the UK government to promote the event and more important to promote the brand identity and image of the city, showing how an event has become not only a touristic product but, above all, the main reason to visit the city.

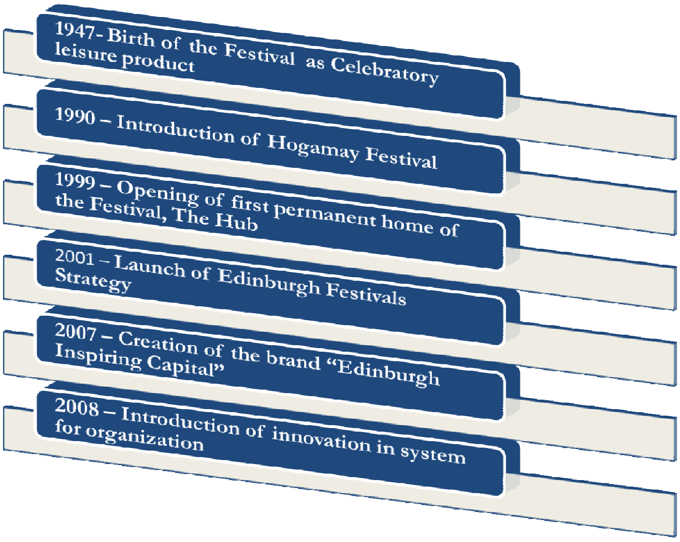
As stated at the beginning of the research, at this event VRIO framework was applied to outline the main resources which have led the city to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage.

This empirical case study was chosen because Edinburgh, as a creative destination has become a successful example of a destination which has made of its festivals its tourist core product. It is, in large part, because of the needs of the festivals which Edinburgh enjoys the wealth of cultural resources which it does. The Theatre Strategy pointed out how the needs of summer festivals resulted in the year-round provision of about 11,000 seats in the city’s principal venues: 15 more per head than any other city in UK other than Glasgow. During much of the year, this plethora of seats presents Edinburgh’s cultural managers with a challenge. In festival times, however, the city’s stages and auditoria provide the hardware essential for the provision of a programme which attracts audiences from all over the world. In venue terms, the city is without parallel in Britain and, probably in the world.

Edinburgh has built an enviable reputation for presenting major high profile events, particularly over the past ten years. The City of Edinburgh Council and its partners in events planning and management take a pro-active and strategic approach to events to ensure that “the best” can be always delivered.

The Festival began in 1947, with the aim of providing “a platform for the flowering of the human spirit.” Right from the start it inspired people to put on shows of their own out with the official Festival, and soon these grew into the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Since then half a dozen or so more festivals have grown up around it in August and early September, and collectively these are often known as “The Edinburgh Festival”. The main evolutionary stages of the Festival are depicts in Figure (figure 7)

Fig. 7. Main Evolutionary Stages of Edinburgh Festival



Source our reworking

As expressed in the above figure the Festival has, all over the years, modified and innovated its structure. In particular, it represents an excellent practice of *innovation* in event management, focusing in the so-called system innovation becoming an example of a good entrepreneurship approach, a destination management approach to develop, a creative destination where all the tourists can consume a tourist product, in which the event can form the "*core*".

The table 2 shows the main important resources available for the event developed by Edinburgh Festival, underlining how the brand concept for International Festival of Edinburgh, has led the destination to build a strong identity. Essentially for the main aim of this research the elements which can led to a superior performance and in particular, to a sustainable competitive advantage can be divided in two macro categories: 1) the continuous development of new ideas and service concept of the event and event communication, belonging to product innovation; 2) the main resources of system innovation can be summarised in the co-operation between public authorities and private companies that seems to be the integrated network, which represent the essential element for Edinburgh success, and the concept of event as system of relationships with different partners. In this sense, the event management is the expression of a real event strategy aimed at promoting Edinburgh as tourist destination in terms of territorial marketing. In fact, focusing the attention on one of the main evolutionary stages of the Festival, it can be highlighted that, already, in 2001 the Edinburgh Council has recognised the essential importance of event strategy creation for promoting the event as system.

Tab. 2. VRIO matrix of Edinburgh Festival

RESOURCES	Resource Valuable?	Resource Rare?	Resource Costly to Imitate?	Should Firm Exploit the Resource?	Competitive Category	Economic Performance	SWOT Category
NATURAL RESOURCES							
Location	V	V	V	V	SUSTAINED COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE	ABOVE NORMAL	STRENGHT AND LONG TERM DISTINCTIVE COMPETENCY
QUALITY LEVEL							
Idea and service concept	V	V	-	-	TEMPORARY COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE	ABOVE NORMAL	STRENGHT AND DISTINCTIVE COMPETENCY
Event Communication	V	V	-	V	TEMPORARY COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE	NORMAL	WEAKNESS AND STRENGHT
Event as system	V	V	-	V	TEMPORARY COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE	NORMAL	STRENGHT AND DISTINCTIVE COMPETENCY
INTEGRATED NETWORK	V	V	V	V	SUSTAINED COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE	ABOVE NORMAL	STRENGHT AND DISTINCTIVE COMPETENCY

Source elaboration from Della Corte, 2004

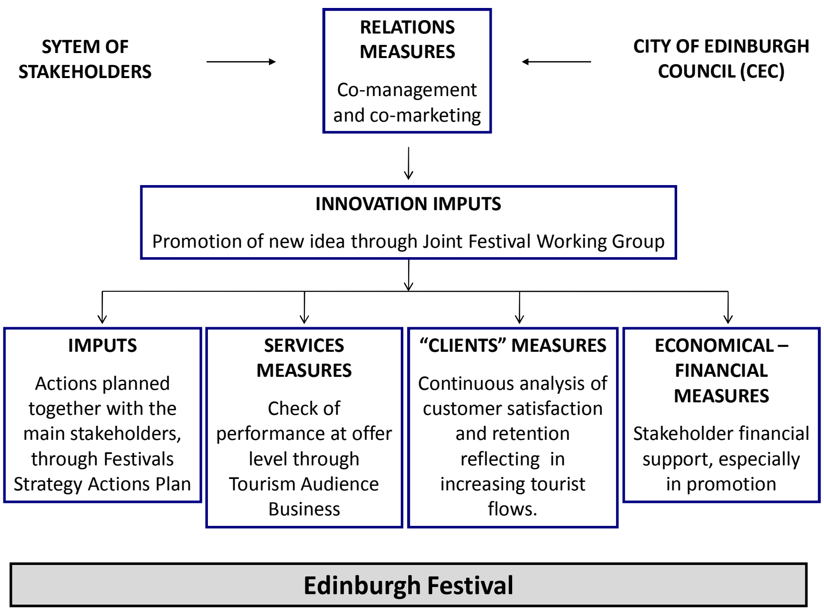
At a national level, Scotland aspires to become “one of the world’s finest events destinations by 2015”. The vision of Edinburgh’s strategy for major events reflects that, recognizing Edinburgh’s unique status as Scotland’s capital city and as the gateway to the rest of the country. Edinburgh will continue growing as one of the world’s finest events cities.

As underlined in the discussion above, the Events Strategy is partnered with Edinburgh’s Festivals Strategy. Together, events and festivals help to promote the city, present similar opportunities and face similar challenges. In particular, by this research it has been outlined that the City of Edinburgh Council is considered to occupy a key role as leader, co-ordinator and catalyst for the development of events in Edinburgh. In order to fulfil this role effectively, the Council must define its own strategic direction on events and in particular, on future programming policy. This element is the clear attestation that in event management there the need of subject that can operate as “pivot” of the entire system and Edinburgh has made of this its distinction.

To better understand the co-operation existing in event organization of Edinburgh International Festival, it seems to be useful to create a mapping of the main touristic players which collaborate to the event creation that are: 1) City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) the main authority that enjoys of a financing support by the Scottish arts Council and Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh, there is also a collaboration with Visitscotland and Eventscotland which promote the summer festivals; 2) Strategy Implementation Group, that monitors the objective achievement which has the main responsibility for the implementation of Festivals Strategy Actions Plan; 3) Cultural Partnership promoted by CEC as management tool of co-operation between suppliers and users of cultural activities; 4) Joint Festival Working Group (JFWG) promoting the continuous idea and concept exchange for joint project development; 5) Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG) created in 2000 to develop the main activities of Edinburgh Action Plan; 6) Unique Events Ltd creates some festivals in collaboration with CEC; 7)Tourism Audience Business composed by all festival representatives, it is a research body; 8)Scottish Executive promotes Scottish culture even out of Scotland; 9) Strategic Project Advisory Group e PR and Marketing Group that are the organizational structures promoting Winter festivals.

Starting from the system of stakeholders and their specific functions in order to purpose the complex event, it is possible depict the event marketing scorecard of Edinburgh Festival (figure 8).

Figure 8. Event Marketing Scorecard of Edinburgh Festival



Source elaboration from Cherubini S., Iasevoli G., 2005.

As issued, the co-operative approach at Edinburgh includes not only cultural firms but even the touristic ones, becoming an example of best practice for event management pointing out innovation and high standard quality.

Result and Conclusions

Events are becoming themselves sources of competitive advantage for destinations. This requires to use and evaluate strategic resources and competences, in event planning, management and organization, trying to reach the highest number of visitors, the highest customer satisfaction and in order to favour positive word of mouth and retention processes.

On the current panorama, few cities seem to have managed to attract national and international attention as a result of marketing actions different from those of competitors, and indeed, the uniformity of images transmitted and perceived appears quite evident, and only rarely is capable to exploit specific aspects, to be emphasized or to appeal to a potential market segment, so as to better cater for the needs of each single segments through differentiation processes. In this context, cities that have benefited most have been those who have successfully highlighted elements that differentiate their strategies from those of competitors. In this field, events could be a strong attractive factor for cities where they take place.

In this sense, the analyzed Edinburgh Festival can surely express the main theory issues stressed in this work, becoming a real best practice as a starting point for many tourist destinations which want to make their event as attractive factor to promote the destination launch or re-positioning.

As stressed in the research, if the main planned elements of event management and marketing are strongly implemented with an event strategy, cities could reach a superior performance in terms of touristic development. In this sense, the empirical section of this work has highlighted that the right balance between the elements quoted above can allow tourist destination to be more competitive in the market. In particular, the VRIO framework applied to the International Edinburgh Festival has pointed out some elements of the two main innovation categories in event management, that are ideas and service concept, event communication and integrated network and the conception of the event as system. Already, in 2002, the Edinburgh City Council has created an Event Strategy, supporting the main one of the Council, moving together step by step in the co-creation of the event and more specifically in the co-marketing process.

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FESTIVALS AS REBUILDERS OF PLACE IDENTITY

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Abstract
Research has indicated that festivals may contribute to rebuild the place-identity through strengthening of the place-belongingness, for the people involved in the festivals and for the host community itself, by functioning as occasions for expressing collective belongings to a group or a place and give possibilities for creating depiction on united histories, cultural practices and ideals. The findings in the paper are based on a qualitative study with 31 in-depth interviews with informants; the festival organisers, operational festival workers, the municipality officers and tourism firms related to four festivals in Finnmark, Norway. These festivals provide core activities build on or displayed in a frame of local culture and heritage, and different ethnicity represented by Norwegian, Russian and Sami culture. In line with the expectations it is concluded that festivals do strengthen identities for both the Sami population in Kautokeino and for the multi-ethnic inhabitants in Kirkenes and Sørøya, which were the places housing the researched festivals.

Keywords: Community festivals; Place-identity; Place-belonging; Finnmark; Norway

Introduction
Festivals may contribute to rebuild the place-identity through strengthening of the place-belongingness, for the people involved in the festivals and for the host community itself. “Interrogating festival settings has yielded insights into how people’s sense of their own identity is closely bound up with their attachment to place” (Quinn, 2005, p. 239), and the sense of place may contribute in the shaping of individuals (Derret 2003). This paper seeks to explore how festivals influence on the place-identity to the people involved in four festivals in Finnmark, Norway.

The data is based on 31 in-depth interviews with festival organisers, operational festival workers, municipality officers and tourism firms in four different community-based festivals in Finnmark, Norway. The festivals were chosen because of their core values based on heritage and traditions in Finnmark; of sea fishing, Sami culture and different ethnicity represented by Norwegian, Russian and Sami culture. The four festivals are located in small communities where the traditional employment has decreased. One is the Ocean Fishing Festival (Havfiskefestivalen) at Sørøya were the fisheries have been the most important workplace. The second, the Easter Festival in Kautokeino (Påskefestivalen in Kautokeino) is a festival with different themes and main focus on Sami (indigenous people) music; and the third is the Sámi Film Festival, an outdoor film festival arranged in Kautokeino. In Kautokeino, reindeer has been the main source of income for the inhabitants. The fourth festival is the Barents Spectacle (Barents Spektakel) in Kirkenes, which is an art festival with focus on the Barents region (Norway, Russia and Finland). Earlier the main workplace in the municipality was AS Sydvaranger, an industrial company that was dismantled, and it went down for many years, but has started up again in 2009. Brennan-Horley, Connell and Gibson (2006, p.72) reflect on that some community centres continue to grow while some "…have become caught in a vicious cycle of decline, losing residents, industries and confidence about prospects for a sustainable future." Gerrard (2000, p.303) argues that for the residents the festival is a sign -of development potential and viability despite the decline in population and poor recruitment to industries.

All these festivals are created from a background of local culture and idealism, and a strong sense of belonging to the local community. Two of the festivals have been arranged for more than 20 years. They attract international participants and audience and are used in the marketing of Finnmark by the tourism industry, and as a representation of the values in the tourism products in Finnmark. The four festivals are built on local heritage and values and two of the festivals can be seen as hallmark events for their community. They are giving an authentic experience and presentation of the culture. These festivals are created from the inside out and offer positive images for the residents and the visitors. The festival role creating an image is described by Quinn (2005, p.932): "The festival, with its connotations of sociability, playfulness, joviality and community provides a ready-made set of positive images on which to base a reconstruction of a less than perfect city image." In these festivals the most important criteria is that the festival should reflect local values and that local people should be involved in arranging the festival. For the migrants and emigrants the festival arena represent positive values by allowing them to have a "good time" while visiting their home place. The festivals contribute as rebuilders of place identity in communities undergoing structural, social and economical change. A good festival experience may also be provided by other festivals that do not have a core activity built on local traditions, like for example The Parkes Elvis Revival Festival in Australia. This festival are in a way build on the opposite authentic values; "The town has gradually deployed a form of "strategic in authenticity" that has placed the town on the tourist map, thus creating a form of invented geography" (Brennan-Horley, Connell & Gibson, 2006, p.72). While still able to contribute to the development of a sense of place and build identities, these outcomes are expected to be different from those created when a festival is rooted more on the culture and traditions of its home place.

The concepts of people identities

Three identity concepts or levels may be differentiated, that is the personal identity, social identity and collective identity (Snow, 2001). *Personal identities* are the attributes and meanings attributed to oneself by the actor. They are self-designations and self-attributions regarded as personally distinctive. *Social identities* are the identities attributed or imputed to others in an attempt to situate them in social space, and they will to some extent overlap with the personal identities. *Collective identity* does not have a consensual definition, but its essence resides in a shared sense of "one-ness" or "we-ness", a feeling of real or imagined shared attributes and experiences among those who comprise the in-group as opposed to an actual or imagined set of "others." However, Karlsen (2007, p.36) sees them all as one: "Identity is formed in the interaction between self and society, and builds a bridge between the inside and the outside, the personal and the public worlds".

In this paper two of the festivals are Sami festivals arranged in a Sami municipality. Sami inhabitants may face different challenges related to the place identity, compared with Norwegian communities.

The identity for the Sami people is "influenced by conceptual narratives related to reindeer herding, and currently to modern academic training and professions, and by meta narratives about evolution, race, ethnicity and nationality" (Viken, p.11, 2006). However, such narratives, although different may also apply to the other ethnic groups in the region

The concepts of place identities

The understanding of festivals and how they influence on a place and the place identity may be discussed from different perspectives. De Bres and Davis (2001) state that community based festivals celebrate both group and place identity. They also points out that festival success could be related to population size, in the perspective that in smaller communities festivals often have higher participating than smaller festivals have in larger communities. In smaller communities the people both participate in arranging and attending festivals, and they do not have to compete with other larger events. Dixon and Durrheim (2000, p.27) describes the understanding of places as "… dynamic arenas that are both socially constituted and constitutive of the social." Geographers and environmental psychologists understanding of place identity is based on the questions of "who we are" and often intimately related to questions of "where we are". Place-identity is defined by Korpela (1989, p.245 – 246) as "… consisting of cognitions of those physical settings and parts of the physical environment, in or with which an individual-consciously or unconsciously-regulates his experience of maintaining his sense of self… This formulation does not necessary limit a person's place-identity to home and its surroundings but applies to every physical environment and object that has a role in ones self-regulation… Place-belongingness is not only one aspect of place-identity, but a necessary basis of it. Around this core the social, cultural and biological definitions and cognitions of the place which become part of the person's place-identity are built."

Festivals as place-identity builders

Festivals prompt local continuity by constituting opportunities to draw on "…shared histories, shared cultural practices and ideals, as well as creating settings for social interactions. They are arenas where local knowledge is produced and reproduced, where the history, cultural in heritance and social structures that distinguish one place from another, are revised, rejected or recreated" (Quinn, 2005, p.928). The festivals may influence identity development for its visitors, organizers and the host communities, and thus the experience of the place identity could be influenced and expressed through a festival arena.

The benefits a festival can bring to a rural community include short-term employment, skills development and increased capacity of residents to find future work, enhancement of social cohesion and reinvention of places and their images (Brennan-Horley, Connell & Gibson, 2006, p.72). The four festivals investigated in this paper are built on traditional cultural heritage, where the activities or the theme chosen for the festivals have roots in daily life of the past and present. Some are build on a desire to make changes in the local community as, to reduce racism or to create cultural harmony. In Finnmark, Norway, the cultural expression of the Sami people known as joik (Sámi song), had been forbidden for many years, but these have been revived, among other factors, through the festivals. Other motives for festivals in Finnmark is a commitment to continue pursue the fishing industry and traditions, which demonstrates the values and interests a community is build on. Also the challenges by being a border community could be solved with a new focus through a festival arena. In art festivals with workshops producing different art and theatre, you are not depending on having the same language. The communication is through the expression in the activities, which have no borders.

A review of former research on festivals and place-identity and interviews with the innovators in the festivals, revealed a range of identity perspectives of the people involved directly or indirectly in the festivals. “Historically, interrogating festival settings has yielded insights into how a people’s sense of their own identity is closely bound up with their attachment to place” (Quinn, 2005, p. 239). A challenge for the small communities in Finnmark has been that there are too few jobs and people have to re-locate or migrate for employment. The young people move to other places to take education and they don’t come back home. This depleted the communities of young people with necessary skills to build a strong, positive and growing community, and the communities sometimes suffered. Festivals can help in restore self-esteem in the community and "… can provide the heart to a community as their celebratory nature provides residents with conditions of freedom and connectedness rather than a fixation on the forms and structures of the community” (Derrett, p. 51, 2003).

A local volunteer in one of the festivals said that he wanted to work on the festival because it made him proud of his home place, and now he dared to say where he came from, confirming that “Memory and sense of place shape individuals, and people can devalue the places they are from by abandoning old worlds and by separating themselves from their roots” (Derrett, p.51, 2003). The natural environment in the four festivals, understood out of the nature frame as the sea with its great fish resources and the winter as a resource for spectacular outdoor stages and activities. The culture frame with old fishing traditions, a border culture build on old communications among the Russian and Norwegian people and an expression of the Sami culture built on old traditions. Festivals that are build on local culture and heritage present an arena where it is possible to pass on the culture, the experiences and the collective memories from the older generations, to the young people and to visitors. Events offer tangible and intangible experiences that connect people to places, and “…that is why some popular events are sited in spectacular locations” (Derrett, 2003, p.50). For the emigrants the festival arena represents positive values by having a “good time” while visiting their home. The festival frame is where you bring … “people back to generously share their special space and favourite places with visiting friends and relatives assists in healing, awareness raising, and through understanding issues of sustainability associated with some delicate environments” (Derrett, 2003 p.52).

Table 1: Festivals, place-belongingness and place-identity in former research

Festivals and place-belongingness
Collective belonging to a group or a place (Quinn, 2005, Ekmann, 1999).
Yielded insight into people’s sense of their own identity (Quinn, 2005).
Events offer tangible and intangible experiences that connect people to places (Derrett, 2003).
Emphasize the feelings of ownership and belonging generated for resident participants (Derrett, 2003).
Possibilities for creating depiction on united histories, united cultural practices and ideals (Quinn, 2005).
Restore self-esteem in a community (Derrett 2003, Dugas & Schweitser, 1997).
Pass on the culture, the experiences and the collective memories from the older generations (Quinn,

2005).
Festivals are arenas where local knowledge is produced and reproduced where history, cultural in heritance and social structures that distinguish one place from another, are revised rejected or recreated (Quinn, 2005).
Memory and sense of place shape individuals (Derrett, 2003, Ferris, 1996).
Engender local continuity (Quinn, 2005).
Festivals and place-identity
Reinvent places and their images (Brennan-Horley, Connell & Gibson, 2006).
Sharing a special space and favourite places assists in healing, awareness rising and understanding issues of sustainability related to delicate environments (Derrett, 2003).
improve the skills and capacity of residents to find future work (Brennan-Horley, Connell & Gibson, 2006).
Engaged interests for the tourism sector (Derrett, 2003).
Contributes to the development of local identity through storytelling (Karlsen, 2007, p. 186).
For the residents the festival is a sign of development potential and viability (Gerrard, 2000).

Host communities holing a strong consciousness about what the festivals mean for the community is a valuable support for the festival development. Following Derrett (p.52, 2003): “It is observed that communities are creating festivals and events to emphasise the value they recognize in the feelings of ownership and belonging generated for resident participants. The extra dimension of involving visitors has engaged the interest of the tourism sector. Festivals can be the gatekeepers of community values, encouraging some people in, while keeping others out.” One way festivals can contribute to the development of identities is through story-telling, explaining who we are through the concerts and other events, and to the media, which retells those stories to others (Karlsen, 2007, p.186). Table 1 presents a short outline of research that has related festival production to identity outcomes.

Method

In terms of methodology this paper uses a qualitative approach, examining four festivals in Finnmark, Norway. In order to investigate the research questions, these community festivals offered the most appropriate festivals for examining the rebuilding of place identity. The festivals were sampled from a descriptive study of 56 festivals in Finnmark in 2007 (Jæger & Mykletun, 2009). Based on the mapping of these 56 festivals, four festivals were selected for further investigation: The Sea Fishing Festival on Sørøya (Havfiskefestivalen on Sørøya), The Easter Festival in Kautokeino (Påskefestivalen in Kautokeino), the Sámi Film Festival in Kautokeino, and Barents Spectacle (Spektakel) in Kirkenes. The paper is further based on data which where gathered from the four festivals, the summer 2008 by interviews with festival managers, operational festival workers, municipality officers and tourism firms. Interviewees were selected based on the leader positions they had in the festival, the municipality and the tourism firms. The festivals are chosen because of their unique values based on heritage and traditions in Finnmark of sea fishing, Sami culture and different ethnicity represented by Norwegian, Russian and Sami culture. They are also built on long festival traditions, because two of the festivals have been arranged for more than 20 years. They all have international participants and audience, as well as a strong “core” activity. Two of the festivals have been used in the marketing of Finnmark by the tourism industry, and as a representation of the values in the tourism products in Finnmark. The data collected should serve to identify how the festivals influence on the identity for different people involved in different roles. It should also identify what the investigated identities means for the festivals and the host communities. And finally how these identities in a way create or rebuild the place identity.

Results

The festivals

The festivals are staged in three small municipalities in Finnmark, and their brief details are listed in table 2 below. Festival Two of the festivals may be seen as hallmark events for their communities. One is the Sea Fishing Festival at Sørøya which was established in 1987. Sørvær is an old fishing village, where the fisheries always have been the main basis of income. The festival has participants that are mostly from Norway but some come from other countries in Europe. The festival has hosted the Norwegian championship and the European championship in sea fishing and has a great reputation because they always caught big fish. In recent years a lot of other local arrangements have grown up around the sea fishing festival, such as concerts, hiking trips, fishing competitions for children and markets. The second festival is the Easter Festival in Kautokeino (Påskefestivalen i Kautokeino) arranged for the first time in 1972. Kautokeino is a native Sámi municipality and the festival is built up on Sámi traditional activities and cultural heritage. Activities in the festival include different concerts with one main competition “The Sámi Grand Prix”, which present both modern and traditional joik, which is a unique from of singing for the Sámi people. Various other activities include the reindeer racing, fishing competitions, snow scooter racing, and more recently they also have arranged the Sámi Film Festival during the Easter Festival. This third festival, the Sámi Film Festival, is also located in Kautokeino. The festival was arranged first time in 2001, and is an outdoor film festival where the movies are displayed on an ice screen. The festival shows movies, provides a film work shop and whish to stimulate to new production of Sámi film. They also give a movie award the Čorvoš, to the best movie every year. The fourth festival is the Barents Spectacle in Kirkenes, arranged first time in 2004. The festival is in a way building on a former festivals arranged by “Pikene på broen”, five women of the Barents region. Kirkenes is a community bordering to Russia and Finland, were the main income has been industry and trade with Russia. The aim with the festival is to power the development of the local society and the cultural co-operation with the northern areas of the neighbouring countries.

Table 2: Festival characteristics

Festivals	*Characteristics*
Sea Fishing Festival at Sørøya *(Havfiskefestivalen på Sørøya) Established in 1987.* Vision: The festival aims to be a rallying point for the people in Hasvik and for other people that want to take part in the festival. Number of visitors are estimated to: 1000, the host municipality Hasvik has 970 inhabitants.	• The festival participants are mostly from Norway but some come from other countries in Europe. • The festival has hosted the Norwegian championship and the European championship in sea fishing. • The festival has a great reputation because they always catch the biggest fish here. • In recent years other activities have expanded around the sea fishing festival, such as concerts, hiking trips, fishing competitions for children and markets.
Easter Festival in Kautokeino (Påskefestivalen i Kautokeino), Established in 1972. Vision: The aim is to present a broad range of Sami music. Påskefestivalen has become a 10 day celebration and display of Sami culture. Number of visitors are estimated to: 10000, The host municipality Kautokeino has 2917 inhabitants.	• The festival is built around Sami traditional activities and cultural heritage, with participants from different countries. • Activities in the festival include different concerts with one main competition “The Sami Grand Prix”, which present both modern and traditional joik, a unique form of singing for the Sami people. • Various other activities include the reindeer racing, ice fishing competitions; snow scooter racing and more recently an outdoor film festival.
Sami Film Festival in Kautokeino, Established in 2001. Vision: The aim is to make a forum where Sami and other film producers can create new films. And that Sami film from the north, are being send out to the rest of the world. Inspire and train new film producers. Number of visitors are estimated to: 2000	• It is an outdoore film festival were the film screen is made of ice and the audience are sitting on snowbenches. The festival display shorts, fiction and documentaries. • The festival also provide a snowmobile drive-in, were the film can be watched from the snow scooter.

Barents Spektakel in Kirkenes, Established 2004. Vision: The aim with the festival is to motivate, stimulate and encourage arenas where people and organizations can meet transverse of borders, level and sector. The festival negotiates art and knowledge to the local people and visitors from the whole Barents region and other guests on the festival. The core of the festival is in the different processes we starts; and that the festival is process oriented. It implies that artists get invited to Kirkenes for shorter and longer periods before the festival, and they attend in a Barents Scholarship Program. The themes are based on actual and tendentious conditions related to the northern areas, and reflect the challenges this region are facing. Contemporary art and culture are the festivals foundation. Number of visitors are estimated to: 2500, The host municipality Sør-Varanger has 9623 inhabitants.	• It is a border festival mainly situated in Kirkenes, a small town bordering on Russia and Finland. • The festival has a strong border theme from the Barents region and offers seminars, trans-border cafes, exhibitions, concerts and other events with local and international contemporary artists, musicians and theatre. • The festival starts with concerts in Russia before the main arrangements commence in Kirkenes.

Place belongingness and place identity

The festivals were created for different reasons. In interviews, the festivals hold a lot of meaning for those who are involved in their organising. Also the officers in the municipalities had a clear desire to help with the festival, and to secure the future of the festivals. The understanding of place-identity is departed in place-belongingness and place-identity, and the findings are displayed in table 3 – 4.

Place-belongingness is a basis of place-identity with person’s social, cultural and biological experiences of a place. Festivals in Finnmark contribute to strengthen social experience of a place when one third of the population in the community is engaged in the festival, and the support to the festival is across all the different political parties. Cultural belonging and united histories are expressed through that the festival is a gathering for the Sami people from four different countries. Some also see the festival as special because it is build on old roots and is in a way not “artificially” created. The history of the native people has often been told by others, so the festival arena gives a possibility to tell their own story. Festivals contribute to create meeting places were Norwegians and people from other nations meet and get to know each others culture.

Place-identity is characterized by the physical settings and parts of the physical environment that influences a person's sense of self. The Sea Fishing Festival legitimate the islands brand which is "in the kingdom of the big fish", because the festival is well known to guarantee world records in fish sizes. Some also gives honour to the festival and says that everything that has been developing in the community has been developing around the festival. Others express that the festival is important for the village because it strengthens the solidarity and gives an income to the whole community. It is also an engaged interest for the tourism sector because of the festival. One informant describes that the goal with the festival was to create pride to come from the island, and recruit more people to visit the island as a tourist.

Festival times give untraditional solutions that are not used in daily life. At the Easter Festival, the Sami Film Festival and the Sea Fishing Festival the tourists where renting rooms in private homes. In Kautokeino this also has been a tradition in former days. The Sami people who looked after the reindeers, the herders, lived out at the mountain plateau as nomads. When they went back to Kautokeino they didn't have houses, so during their stay in the village, before they followed the reindeer herd out to the coast, they stayed with relatives in Kautokeino. In a way this old tradition is continued in the present festival. When the Kautokeino Hotel was destroyed in a fire, the number of festival visitors even increased in the next year festival. According to the organisers the musicians, artists and other visitors described this as a different festival experience, and that they in a way were being a part of the local community. Also at the sea fishing festival at Sørøya some of the visitors were living in private homes. It is too few hotel rooms and cottages, so that is the only possibility if you want to take part in the festival. People that choose these festivals don't expect luxury accommodation; their focus is on the core activity. Enjoying your breakfast around the kitchen table with fishermen, musicians and local people may build relations that create the festival, and that gives the experiences just a festival arena could give. When the owner of the house comes by in the morning and says: "Good morning, did you sleep well in my bed tonight?" the communication is on a different level than it is in a traditional guest and host role.

Table 3: Place-belongingness

Place-belongingness	
Former research on festivals and place-identity	*Findings investigated in this paper*
Collective belonging to a group or a place.	"It is important to take care of the community" "Festivals reflect all art – the time you live in." "Because of depopulation people from the whole island have come along, not just from one village as in the beginning."

	"One third of the population in the community is engaged in the festival." "The festival is important for the local people, and we have solidarity across the different political parties."
Yelded insight into people's sense of their own identity.	"The festival is first of all for the local general public and for the Sami North Calotte – it's about Sami identity." "The music festival is well-known. The different arrangements have developed from being just for the local people, to become a festival." "The festival is not created for tourists, but by the people in the village and for the people in the village."
Events offer tangible and intangible experiences that connect people to places.	"The festival is important for the people in the village. This is the big celebration during the year. It gathers family from the whole area." "People that has moved from the community, often comes home in the Easter instead of in the summer holiday." "We wanted to say something with "different voices" so we have created a trans border café concept, which is an alternative seminar stage." "This is the week during the year were now one go away, and a lot of relatives and friends are coming to participate in the festival." "I am proud of what we have created here."
Emphasize the feelings of ownership and belonging generated for resident participants.	"It is life in the village with the festival. I hope someone get willingness to move home again." "The main phrase – is that the festival is for us. That gives a genuine festival." "The festival is special because it has so old roots. The festival was not created."
Possibilities for creating depiction on united histories, united cultural practices and ideals. Festivals are arenas where local knowledge is produced and reproduced where history, cultural in heritance and social structures that	"The festival is a gathering of the Sami from four different countries." "Because of the festival it is more people out on the coast that dare to bring out the Sami traditional costume." "The festival is a Sami gathering – you are one of the group. The Swedes for example miss this kind of meeting place." "The festival expresses the Sami history until today." "The festival is important to ensure long traditions. It has a national perspective and responsibility and it is also important in an international perspective." "It was about meeting places were Norwegians and people from other

distinguish one place from another are revised rejected or recreated.	nations met – so they get to know each other. That was the most important function the festival had.”
Restore self-esteem in a community.	“The Sami is the foundation; by the Sami, for the Sami and about the Sami.” “In the culture expression the festival means that we are visible.” “The festival does something to our pride and does something to us.” “People have become proud of the place, to come from Sørøya.” “The festival contributes to strengthen the identity in relation to some negative happenings in the community.” “The festival has given a backbone for the community.” “The most important is the identity build up.”
Pass on the culture, the experiences and the collective memories from the older generations.	“In former times the reindeer herders lived by others when they came to the village. The festival is continuing pursuing an old culture by offering musicians and festival goers overnight stay in private houses.” “People have been meeting in the Easter also in former days. Then as now it was tradition to have confirmation, weddings and christening.”

Table 4: Place-identity

Place-identity	
Former research on festivals and place-identity	*Findings investigated in this paper*
Reinvent places and their images.	“The festival has become important for all three villages on the island.” “The sea fishing festival legitimate the islands brand – “In the kingdom of the big fishes”, and are in a way building up the image.” “The interest for the festival has increased a lot compared with the first year. I think it is because people have seen that the festival mean something. It is much on the agenda under the festival that get political importance for the area. Things are worked out here – it creates net works that are important for the rest of the year. Relations between people are

	being created – for example in areas close to the borders.”
For the residents the festival is a sign of development potential and viability.	“The week the festival is arranged, the whole island is alive.” “A festival is joy. The music culture is important for the people, and the happiness among the people creates strong communities.” “To loose the festival would be like cutting off your hand.” “It’s a rallying point for the people that have moved from the island.”
Sharing a special space and favourite places assists in healing, awareness rising and understanding issues of sustainability related to delicate environments.	“It is important to show our nice island.”
Improve the skills and capacity of residents to find future work.	“We observed that the fisheries went down and we hoped the festival could give a new income.” “Everything that has been developing in the community has been growing around the festival.” “The festival is important for the village. It strengthens the solidarity and gives an income to the whole community.” “The festival is important for the whole island and the trade.” ”What we use to say is that this community was a community characterized by ten-ton-thinking. Everything that was valuable had to weight more than ten ton. This because the former industry workplace still was placed inn the peoples “soul”. Such things that dealt with culture, was considered as women enterprise.”
Engaged interests for the tourism sector.	“The goal was to create pride to come from the island, and recruit more people to visit the island as a tourist.” “The tourists came when the festival started.”
Contributes to the development of local identity through storytelling	“The festival is the peak event through the whole year.” “ Natives -The festival is important because it is always others that has told our history”

Conclusion

This paper has examined the role festivals may have in rebuilding the place-identity and strengthening of the place-belongingness for the people involved in the festivals and for the host community itself. In the small communities the festival arena gives an informal communication between the visitors and the local people. In this paper we reviewed the place-belongingness and place-identity generated in the meeting between the local people, the visitors, the visiting relatives, the participants, the musicians and the audience. In our analysis of 31 interviews with people related to the four festivals in Finnmark we found that the key dimensions in the rebuilding of place-identity was: Contribute to strengthen social experience of a place; support to the festival is across all the different political parties; the festival is a gathering for the Sami people from four different countries; the festival as special because it is build on old roots and is in a way not created; the history of the Sami people has often been told by others but the festival arena gives a possibility to Sami people to tell their own story; create meeting places were Norwegians and people from other ethnic backgrounds meet and get to know each others culture; the sea-fishing festival legitimate he islands brand; everything that has been developing in the community has been developing around the festival; the festival is important for the village because it strengthens the solidarity and gives an income to the whole community; an engaged interest for the tourism sector because of the festival; the festival create pride to come from the island, and recruit more people to visit the island as a tourist.

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THE IMPACT OF FESTIVALS ON THE PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION OF A CITY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TURKISH AND SWEDISH FESTIVALS

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Abstract
In the tourism literature, cities exist as a product or corporate brand that can be promoted in the market and can be communicated with the stakeholders. Therefore, this study aims to understand how festivals affect on the promotion and communication of a city. Data were gathered from managers of festivals by a survey in Adana, Izmir (Turkey), and Göteborg (Sweden). Main findings show that festivals create strong communication among current residents. However, impacts of festivals on the promotion of a city are limited in its county or in the international tourism market. Moreover, the study suggests that the festivals of Adana and Izmir are less efficient in order to promote their cities. Finally, Göteborg festivals help to promotion of the city in the country and Scandinavian region.

Keywords: City Promotion, City Communication, Festival Management, Adana, Izmir, Göteborg**.**

Introduction
Festivals and other type of special events are the fastest growing and most important products in the tourism market (Crompton and McKay, 1997). One of the reasons for this growing is the increasing demand for them (Yavuz, 2007). The other reason is the important role of events in marketing activities of the city tourism (Kim and Chalip, 2004). Festivals, shows types of events particularly help to increase the number of visitors (Light, 1996; Ritchie, 1984), to compensate for the seasonality of the ordinary tourism (Higham and Hinch, 2002), to promote the city image (Roche, 1994) and to

contribute to the development and sustainability of the urban economy (Bramwell, 1997). Therefore, public, private and non-profit organizations who are interested in promoting the image and the “brand” of their city support events (Lee, Lee and Wicks, 2004).

The number of studies on festivals has also been increasing in the tourism literature since the early 1990s (for a review see Getz, 2008). These studies are concerned with tourism countries (Kim, Borges and Chon, 2006), the economic impact of festivals (Moscardo, 2007), the social impact of them or the motivation and satisfaction level of visitors. Recently, however, new research themes have emerged in the area of festival studies. Some of these themes include understanding the structure of the festival industry (i.e. Andersson and Getz, 2009) or the relationships among stakeholders (Larson, 2002; Richards and Ryan, 2004). Although some of the important functions of festivals are their promotion and communication capacity for the city tourism, there are only few studies that focus on them. Prentice and Andersen (2003), and Raj (2003) studied the impact of Edinburg Festivals on the promotion of its cultural tourism. Richards and Wilson (2002) also analyzed the effect of events of European cultural capitals on the promotion of Rotterdam. Felsenstein and Flischer (2003) evaluated the influence of two local festivals on the tourism promotion controlling for the public assistance and the visitor expenditure. These studies use the expenditure level of tourists or the number of tourists in order to measure the impact of events on the promotion of a city. Moreover, the studies mostly analyzed only one city (i.e. Edinburg) or one country (i.e. Felsenstein and Fleischer, 2003) events. So far, the important link between how managers of festivals perceive the contribution of their events to the promotion of the city and if there is any differences between countries are absent in the tourism literature.

Therefore, the aim of the current study is to understand how events affect and contribute to the promotion and communication of the city. Although previous studies used the expenditure and number of tourists in order to measure the impact, the current study is using the perception of festival managers on how their festivals affect the promotion and communication of cities. To gain further knowledge, this study includes festivals from Sweden (Göteborg) and Turkey (Adana and İzmir).

The paper is structured as follows. The first section reviews the literature on place marketing and promotion mix, how the city tourism literature debates place marketing and promotion, how promotion and communication tools affect the city tourism, and the function of events and festivals is in city tourism. The second and third sections are summarizes the methodology of this research and displays main results. The last section discusses the findings and the impact of events on the promotion and communication of cities.

Literature review

Marketing and promotion mix in city tourism

In practices, place marketing operates especially when place is a product and a geographical locus which exists in a market and compete with other places. Place marketing has been functioning in practice since the beginning of the colonization of America. In time, place marketing revolved to attract people not only just for work and habitation but also as an income generator. According to Kavaratzis and Ashworh (2008), place marketing has three main development periods. In the first period, place marketing performed as a place promoter in the agricultural colonization and selling industrial places (Ward, 1998). In the second period, place marketing operates as a planning instrument for cities and tries to re-image the cities and to sell post-industry cities (Ward, 1998). Place marketing carried many activities such as mass and specialized marketing, improvement of the city infrastructure, increased co-operation among public and private actors, re-imaged the place, and competition in the tourism market. In the third period, place marketing functions the branding of a place and the communication with the city stakeholders similar to corporate communication activities (Barke, 1999; Kavaratzis and Ashworh 2005). As can be seen from those periods, place and place marketing uses one or more forms of marketing mix in order to accomplish several functions. Therefore, here place marketing promotional mix will be discussed here.

Compared with consumer products, however, a place, as a product such as city or an event, is more complex and it creates difficulties for marketing practitioners (Morgan, Pritchard and Pride 2002). The same city or event can have different meanings for different consumers, although those consumers are visiting the same city or event. For example, a resident may attend an event in order to interact with other city residents or just spend his or her leisure time. A local or international firm can join the same event in order to sell or promote its products. Yet, a tourist can just go for entertainment and experience the local culture or life (Ashworth and Voogt, 1990).

In the tourism marketing literature, cites have been treated in several different ways such as a product that can be sold or a corporate brand that can be promoted and communicated. For example, Ashworth and Voogt (1990) dealt with the city as a product that could be a part of total tourism offers. Buhalis (2000) and Ward (1998) approved the city as a product that could be sold and promoted. Balakrshnan (2008) regarded the city as a product and determined how it could position itself in the market. Ekinci and Hosany (2006) addressed the city as a corporate brand and explained how the concept of brand personality could be applied to a city. Morgan et al. (2002), Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005), Puczko, Ratz and Smith (2007), and Yavuz (2007) discussed the city as a corporate brand and explained how a city could be branded, re-imaged, and promoted. Finally, Trueman, Klemm and Giroud (2004) raised the question if a city, can be communicated as a corporate brand. The current study accepts the notion of the city as a brand that can be promoted in the market and communicated with its stakeholders.

The promotion and communication of cities

Many destinations which want to position themselves in the international tourism market are making massive promotions, mostly in the form of advertisements, in order to improve their tourism image, and to increase their attractiveness (Tosun and Bilim, 2004). Although the massive advertisements present general features of a destination and increase the awareness of the name, these kinds of promotions can be insufficient to support its position and attractiveness in the market. Moreover, those promotions do not strongly affect the buying behaviour of tourists (Yavuz, 2007). However, there are effective promotion and communication tools for city tourism. A city can use events such as trade fairs, festivals that are also mass communication and promotion tools. According to Seisdedos's study, 71% of marketing managers of some of European cities uses trade fairs in their marketing promotion activities. They also utilise business seminars, media and sponsorship of cultural and sports events. A few of them promote their city on the internet. This evaluation of the tools shows that cities are marketing, promoting, and communicating with face-to-face tools more than non-face-to-face tools (Seisdedos, 2006).

Corporations and firms use events as key components in their marketing and image promotion (Bowdin, Allen, Harris, O'Toole and McDonnell, 2006). Now also cities start to use events as a means of its promotion. Therefore, events and festivals are increasingly recognized as being valid tools for city branding and marketing (Roche, 2000). Providers of tourism packages increasingly include festivals and events as central activities (Picard and Robinson, 2006). These can also be used to change the image of a city, For example, Johannesburg that uses place marketing effectively and promote itself with events (Cornelissen, 2005) in order to change its previous reputation as an insecure city.

According to the research by Seisdedos (2006), city marketing activities usually contain face-to-face promotion activities such as trade fairs, business seminars, media, sponsorship of cultural and sports events, road shows and study tours. According to recent marketing communication development, communication should move from persuasion to interaction that means listening, and being in relation with the target audience (Hughes and Fill, 2007). Therefore, festivals and events have become key promotion and communication tools for cities since they create an interactional, relational and experimental atmosphere.

The impact of festivals on city tourism

Human beings have organized informal or formal events to mark important life or natural activities for a long time. Seasons, agricultural products or personal and national moments have been some of the themes of those events (Allen, O'Toole, McDonnell and Harris, 2002). In tourism studies, events and festivals exist as a product and a promotion tool (Burgan and Mules, 1992; Backman, Backman, Uysal and Mohr Sunshine, 1995; Crompton and McKay, 1994; Uysal and Gitelson, 1994). Hall (1989) summarized that events can have different types of impact on societies such as social, political, economic. Getz (1997) and Hall (1992) pointed out that organizers of a festival and local governments mostly focused on the economic impact of events and festivals. However, events and festivals also serve functions in the social life to protect the cultural and historical heritage, create recreational and leisure activities for society (Long and Perdue, 1990). Furthermore, according to Felsenstein and Fleischer (2003), festivals and events could be useful promotion tools for cities since they positively affect the demand of local tourism and successful events can also help to re-image the city.

Impacts of events and festivals on society, economy, environment and city tourism have been widely studied. Impact studies focus on their benefits. For example, economic benefits of festivals and events are the most widely studied area in event management literature (Burgan and Mules, 1992; Crompton, 1995; Crompton and McKay, 1994; Jackson, Houghton, Russell and Triandos, 2005; Lynch and Jensen, 1984; Long and Perdue, 1990; Mules and Faulkner, 1996; Simmons and Urquhart, 1994). There are also a few studies focuses on how festivals affect the community (Delamere, 2001; Gibson, 2005; McCabe, 2006; Jackson, 2008; Small, Edwards and Sheridan, 2005). For example, Jackson (2008) studied how residents perceive the impacts of a special event and found that they favour the economic and social impact of the event.

Especially festivals are cultural artefacts that cannot be simply consumed (Waterman, 1998) create an interactive communication and identity in human's lives. Therefore, tourism marketers who can easily interact with tourists during the festival can control their promotion and communication activities. There are successful place marketing activities that use festivals and events in city promotion and communication activities. A better example might be Barcelona (Nagle, 1999) that used events to position its tourism products. For example, 1992 Olympic Game ameliorated Barcelona's popularity as a short break destination from 16th to 13th in Europe (A Report of Department of Communities, Media and Sport, 2007). The destination organization of Barcelona "Turisme de Barcelona" has promoted Barcelona’s tourism products from the theme of “enjoy with sun” to the theme of “a cultural and business tourism city”. There had been several cultural events such as “Year of the Contemporary Art”, “the Year of Gaudi”, and “Year of Design” since 2000 in Barcelona (Sabau, 2008). Another example could Edinburgh. According to Prentice and Andersen’s (2003) study, Edinburgh festivals helped the promotion of the city as an international art attraction. In the same vein, Raj (2003) also interpreted how Edinburgh festivals promoted the image of it as a cultural city. Raj (2003) also expressed that the promotion activity of Leeds West Indian Carnival increased the attractiveness of Leeds’s cultural tourism beyond the local region. An other outstanding example could be Tamworth which used country music festival and had differentiated itself from other cities which had been promoting themselves with music festivals such as opera, jazz, or classic (Gibson, 2005). According to Richards and Wilson (2004), cultural capital events of Rotterdam were successful and they contributed the cities image as a cultural city in Europe.

Events have been used by corporate brand to allow to marketing managers select target group(s) and tailor the message of mass communication according to their needs (McDonnell and Gebhardt, 2002). In a similar way, cities use events in order to create successful promotions in market. Although cites use several promotion and communication tools, such as festivals and events, in their place marketing mix (Hall, 1992), there are few studies which measure how they contribute to the promotion and communication of a city. Furthermore, there are few questions such as what managers of festivals think on how much their events/festivals contribute to the city promotion are unanswered.

Methodology

The aim of the current study is to understand how festivals affect and contribute to the promotion and communication of a city. Whereas previous studies used tourists’ expenditure and the number of tourists in order to measure the promotion impact of festivals, the current study uses the perception of festival managers on how their festival affects the promotion and communication of the city. To achieve the main goal, data of the study have been collected from managers of festivals by a survey in Adana, Izmir (Turkey), and Göteborg (Sweden).

The survey had two parts; the first part aimed to collect descriptive information of regular festivals taking place in these cities. The second part was targeted to measure how much festivals contributed the promotion and communication of these cities. These questions used Likert type response scales ranging from “1=strongly disagree” to “5= strongly agree”. In order to measure the impacts of festivals, authors first wrote down 23 possible items of promotion and communication impacts of festivals in Turkish. Than two graduate students who had a destination management course from Çukurova University evaluated those items. After students reviews, authors selected “13” items. The final version of questions was translated in Swedish by one of the authors. Three PhD students from Linköping University revised the Swedish version of the survey.

Some of items that were in the second part evaluated how festivals contribute the promotion and communication of the city in national and international market. Since place marketing should communicate not only with possible target tourists but also with place audiences such as residents, local entrepreneurs and firms (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2008), some of other items intend to understand how festivals create communication with the internal residents and business actors of cities.

Sweden and Turkey started to organize tourism-oriented festivals to increase their advantages in the market. Göteborg and Izmir aspire to be the event cities in their countries. Nowadays, both cities are organizing many, local, national and international festivals. Adana that is located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea is one of the big trade cities in the region and has 2 million inhabitants. Nevertheless, comparing with the other coastal cities such as Izmir and Antalya, Adana is not a tourism city in Turkey. However, like many other Turkish cities, Adana has recently started to promote city tourism activities and active branding. Therefore, there are many ongoing events in this city.

The participant festivals were selected from the webpage of cities. The study excluded festivals that had themes of national or independent days. For example, Izmir and its districts had several events of independence days. Excluding them helped to find comparative festivals. After the exclusion, there were 16 festivals in Adana, 25 festivals in İzmir and 20 festivals in Göteborg in the final participants list. In order to increase the participant number, the managers of festivals were contacted via phone and were invited to participate into the study. Although the survey was conducted in a busy period (in August 2008 in Turkey and in May 2009 in Sweden), the response rate was satisfactory. The response rate of Adana is 62%, İzmir's response rate is 28% and Göteborg's response rate is 40%.

Collecting data with a survey form from managers in three cities has its own advantages and disadvantages. Although surveys are inflexible and create limitations to get the full information from the participants, they are still useful when there is distance between a researcher and a participant (Sapsford, 2006). Especially in this study, since data were collected from multiple cities, surveys create advantage. To solve the limitations of information providing, the authors communicate with the participants on the phone more than one and explained the question if necessary. Moreover, it can be a limitation for this study to be based on perceptions of managers since perceptions can contain personal bias towards the measured impact. However, since festivals managers are important decision makers on the promotion and communication of festivals, they have extensive knowledge about the aim of the festivals and its operations. Therefore, managers may evaluate the impact of them better than others may do. Moreover, perceptions of stakeholders (e.g. managers, residents) are widely used to evaluate the impact of festivals in the literature. For example, Gursoy, Kim and Uysal (2004) observed the impact of festivals and special events with their managers. Similarly, Byrd, Bosley and Dronberger (2009) used stakeholder perceptions so that to evaluate the impact of tourism in rural area.

Findings

The findings of the study are obtained from the statistical calculations such as frequencies, mean and standard deviation. Table 1 presents the descriptive findings of responded festivals of the cities. Descriptive findings were categorized into according festivals types, organizers, time, scope, budgets, contributions of sponsors to budgets, number of visitors, and types of advertisements.

As can be seen Table 1, all the 10 festivals of Adana that participate in this study are organised by municipalities. 5 of them are local, 3 of them are national and only 2 of them are international. Therefore, their scope/size is limited with Adana or Turkey. Professional event companies could only manage the organization of international festivals. Descriptive information of Izmir festival shows that the Izmir festivals are more local than international (See Table 1). Two Izmir festivals that are international use professional festival organizers. The municipalities of Izmir or its counties mostly financed the festivals. Adana and Izmir use published media (e.g. newspaper or brochures…), TV and radio in most case, but not electronic media. The studied festivals of Göteborg are more international than national and local. Half of those festivals are organized by professional festival organizations.

The advertisement tools of Göteborg are mostly published and electronic media and Göteborg festivals rarely used TV and radio.

Table.1. Descriptive Information of Participant Festivals (in numbers)

Descriptive Information	**Adana**	**Izmir**	**Göteborg**
Number of Participant Festivals	10	7	8
Response Rate of Surveys (%)	62	28	40
Type of Organizer (1)			
Public (municipality/ civil government)	8	7	1
Non-profit or joint	1	0	4
Private	1	0	3
Type of Organizer (2)			
Professional festival organization	2	2	4
Internal department	8	5	4
Time			
Once a year	10	7	7
Other	0	0	1
Scope			
Local	5	4	2

National	4	1	2
International	1	2	4
Budget			
Less then 50000 €	NA	NA	2
50001 - 200000 €	NA	NA	1
More than 200001 €	NA	NA	3
Sponsors contributions to the festival budget			
0% -33%	6	3	3
%34-%67	2	1	2
%67-%100	0	0	2
Number of Visitors			
Less than 10000	4	3	2
10001-40000	5	3	3
More than 40001	1	1	3
Types of advertisement media			
Brochure Invitation (Yes/No)	8/2	7/0	8/0

Advertisement in Newspaper-Journal (Yes/No)	10*/0	7*/0	6/2
Radio (Yes/No)	8*/2	3*/4	3*/5
TV (Yes/No)	7*/3	4*/3	3/5
WebPages of festivals and sponsors (Yes/No)	8/2	2/5	7/1
Advertisement in e-media (i.e. newspaper (Yes/No)	0/10	0/7	2/6

* Local media

In addition to the descriptive information above, Table 2 shows the themes of the studied festivals. The themes of Adana festivals are agricultural (e.g. cherry) fruit, sportive activities (wrestle) and film. The themes of Izmir festivals are agricultural products (flowers, cherry), art, poetry etc. but their theme are more divers than the themes of Adana. The themes of Göteborg's festivals are more related to entertainment (i.g film, music, comedy), cultural and science. The comparison of the festivals themes highlights that Adana's festivals are more rurally oriented than the others are.

Table .2. Themes of Festivals

	Adana	Izmir	Göteborg
Themes	Cherry Peach Radish Watermelon Kebab Entertainment Film Wrestle	Cherry Art Fishing and Underwater Flower Poetry Youth Children	Culture Science Music Entertainment Film Comedy

To determine the perception of managers on the impact of their festivals on the promotion and communication of their city, the frequencies of their agreements and disagreements with the items were calculated. The results of those calculations are presented in Tables 3-5.

As can be seen in the Table 3, the festival managers in Adana mostly agree that their festivals create meeting points for current residents and fellow citizens of Adana, and increase the collaboration between local institutions and firms (see the item a1, a2 and a9). Managers also think that their festivals help to promote Adana in Turkey (see the item a3, a5). However, the impact of festivals on the local economy of Adana is limited (see the items a10 and 11). Furthermore, festivals of Adana have only limitedly contribution to promote Adana in the international tourism market. According to the results, most of managers think their festivals have little on the international promotion of Adana (see a4, a6, a7 and a8). As a summary, the impact of festivals on the promotion and communication of Adana is limited in the city and in Turkey.

Table.3. Perceived impacts of festivals of Adana on its Promotion and Communication

		Frequencies						
Item Numbers		**Strongly Disagree (%)**	**Disagree (%)**	**Neither Disagree nor Agree (%)**	**Agree (%)**	**Strongly Agree (%)**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
a1	This festival helps the city's residents to socialize	00,0	22,2	11,1	22,2	44,4	3,89	1.3
a2	This festival helps fellow citizens to socialize with the Adana's current residents.	00,0	0,00	10,0	60,0	30,0	4,20	0,6
a3	This festival helps to introduce Adana to other Turkish citizens	0,00	22,2	11,1	22,2	44,4	3,89	1,3
a4	This festival helps to introduce Adana to the international tourists	22.2	0.00	44,4	0.00	33.3	3,22	1,6
a5	This festival helps to promote Adana in Turkey.	0,00	0,00	33,3	22,2	44,4	4,11	0,9
a6	This festival helps to promote Adana as an international tourism attraction.	11,1	11,1	44,4	11,1	22,2	3,22	1,6
a7	This festival contributes to the promotion of Turkey abroad	22,2	11,1	22,2	22,2	22,2	3,11	1,5
a8	This festival helps to introduce local culture and tourism products to international tourists.	00,0	22,2	22,2	33,3	22,2	3,56	1,1
a9	This festival increases the collaborations among local institutions &firms.	00,0	00,0	33,3	33,3	33,3	4,00	0,9

a10	This festival helps to promote the local products and services abroad	20,0	20,0	20,0	00,0	40,0	3,20	1,7
a11	This festival increases the trade potential of Adana.	00,0	33,3	00,0	22,2	44,4	3,78	1,4
a12	This festival popularizes Adana.	10,0	00,0	40.0	10.0	40.0	3,80	1,1

In Izmir, the studied managers think their festivals have a rather limited impact on the promotion and communication of Izmir. As can be seen in Table 4, the festival managers of Izmir agree with a few items which measure the impact of festivals on residents such as “This festival helps the city’s residents to socialize”, “This festival helps fellow citizens to socialize with the current residents of İzmir” and “This festival increases the collaborations among local institutions & firms” (see the item i1, i2, i9). However, they mostly disagree with other items that evaluate the promotion impacts of festivals in Turkey and in the international tourism market (see the item a4, a6, a7, a11, and a12).

Table.4. Perceived impacts of festivals of Izmir on its Promotion and Communication

		Frequencies						
Item Numbers		**Strongly Disagree (%)**	**Disagree (%)**	**Neither Disagree nor Agree (%)**	**Agree (%)**	**Strongly Agree (%)**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
i1	This festival helps the city’s residents to socialize	00,0	00,0	00,0	71,4	28,6	4,29	0,5
i2	This festival helps fellow citizens to socialize with the current residents of Izmir	00,0	00,0	14,3	42,9	42,9	4,29	0,8
i3	This festival helps to introduce İzmir to other Turkish citizens	14,3	28,6	28,6	00,0	28,6	3,00	1,5
i4	This festival helps to introduce Izmir to the international tourists	42,9	14,3	14,3	00,0	28,6	2,57	1,8
i5	This festival helps to promote Izmir	28,6	14,3	14,3	14,3	28,6	3,00	1,7

	in Turkey.							
i6	This festival helps to promote Izmir as an international tourism attraction.	28,6	14,3	00,0	28,6	28,6	3,14	1,8
i7	This festival contributes to the promotion of Turkey abroad	42,9	28,6	00,0	00,0	28,6	2,42	1,8
i8	This festival helps to introduce local culture and tourism products to international tourists.	28,6	14,3	14,3	14,3	28,6	3,00	1,7
i9	This festival increases the collaborations among local institutions &firms.	14,3	00,0	00,0	57,1	28,6	4,00	1,0
i10	This festival helps to promote the local products and services abroad	28,6	14,3	28,6	28,6	00,0	2,58	1,3
i11	This festival increases the trade potential of Izmir.	14,3	28,6	28,6	00,0	28,6	3,00	1,5
i12	This festival popularizes Izmir.	14,3	28,6	28,6	00,0	28,6	3,00	1,5

The perception of managers of the Göteborg festivals on how their festivals affect the promotion and communication of the city is presented in Table 5. According to these managers, their festivals have a contribution to current residents. However, only three managers believe that their festivals create a communication with former citizens of Göteborg. Moreover, according to the survey impact, only some of the managers agree that his or her festival affects the trade potential of Göteborg (see the item g10 and g11). Half of the surveyed managers think their festivals contribute to the promotion and communication of Göteborg in Sweden (see the items g3, g5). However, the impact of festivals on the promotion of Göteborg abroad is restricted (see g4, g6). In addition, some of those managers wrote on the survey, that their festivals are not international but rather Scandinavian attractions. Although there is some variation, it can be said from these findings, that the surveyed festivals of Göteborg contribute to the promotion and communication of Göteborg in Sweden and in Scandinavia.

Table.5. Perceived impacts of festivals of Göteborg on its Promotion and Communication

		Frequencies						
Item Numbers		**Strongly Disagree (%)**	**Disagree (%)**	**Neither Disagree nor Agree (%)**	**Agree (%)**	**Strongly Agree (%)**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
g1	This festival helps the city's residents to socialize	00,0	00,0	25,0	00,0	75	4,50	0,9
g2	This festival helps fellow citizens to socialize with the current residents of Göteborg.	25,0	12,5	25,0	00,0	37,5	3,12	1,7
g3	This festival helps to introduce Göteborg to other Swedish citizens	00,0	12,5	25,0	12,5	50	4,00	1,2
g4	This festival helps to introduce Göteborg to the international tourists	12,5	25,0	25,0	12,5	25	3,12	1,5
g5	This festival helps to promote Göteborg in Sweden.	00,0	12,5	12,5	37,5	37,5	4,00	1,1
g6	This festival helps to promote Göteborg as an international tourism attraction.	00,0	25,0	25,0	12,5	37,5	3,62	1,3
g7	This festival contributes to the promotion of Sweden abroad	00,0	12,5	12,5	50,0	25,0	3,88	1,0
g8	This festival helps to introduce local culture and tourism products to international tourists.	12,5	12,5	12,5	37,5	25,0	3,50	1,4
g9	This festival increases the collaborations among local institutions &firms.	00,0	25,0	12,5	00,0	62,5	4,00	1,4
g10	This festival helps to promote the local products and services abroad	12,5	37,5	12,5	00,0	37,5	3,12	1,6

g11	This festival increases the trade potential of Göteborg.	12,5	12,5	12,5	37,5	25	3,50	1,4
00,0	This festival popularizes Göteborg.	12,5	00,0	12,5	00,0	75	4,25	1,5

Comparisons of the festivals of all the cities show that the festivals function as leisure activities for residents in all those three places. The managers of the Turkish festivals strongly support that their festivals is a communication tool between current and former residents. In the Göteborg context, the perceived communication function of the festivals between these groups is poor. A majority of the managers of all the cities agree that their festivals partly contribute the promotion and communication of the city in their countries. However, the results point out that the festivals of Göteborg help to promote its city out of the country more than the festivals of İzmir and Adana. Moreover, the festivals of Göteborg support the promotion of the city more than the festivals of Turkish cities do.

Conclusion and Discussion

The purpose of the study is to understand how festivals can affect and contribute to the promotion and communication of a city. To satisfy the purpose, data was gathered from managers of festivals by means of a survey conducted in Adana, İzmir and Göteborg in 2008-09. The results show that festivals to some extent do affect the promotion and communication of their city. Above all, the results of the study suggest that festivals create a communicative atmosphere among the residents of cities. This finding is parallel to results reported in the previous literature which state that festivals create recreational and leisure activities for the community (Byrd et al., 2009) and increase the coherence in the society (Gursoy et al., 2004).

In the current study, the managers rated the impact of the festivals on the trade potential of the city rather low in all three cities. This finding does not support the current literature which strongly argues that festivals influence the local economy (i.g. Jackson et al., 2005; Long and Perdu, 1990; Uysal and Gitelson, 1994). However, it is consistent with sociological research (i.g. Rao, 2001). According to researchers in this field, festivals are public goods; therefore, they support the soul of the community more than the economy (Gursoy et al., 2004). The main reason behind the disagreement between previous studies and the current study regarding economic impact can be the measurement of economic impact. Previous studies focused on the expenditure of tourists or the revenue of tourism firms. The current study does not directly focus on this kind of direct financial measures. As Crompton and McKay (1994) point out, reports of economic impact of festivals in the literature tend to be bright since they mostly contain their revenue impact and discard their cost. Moreover, the assessment of the impact and if it is positive or negative can change from one stakeholder to another (Byrd et al., 2009). In the current study, festival managers may have several goals such as to increase the social benefits (especially in art, science, film festivals) which mean they may not directly focus on the economic side of festivals.

The findings suggest that not all festivals contribute to the promotion of a city in its country and in the international tourism market. This findings partly contradicts some previous studies which see festivals as a promotion tool for the development of city tourism (Cornelissen, 2005; Gibson, 2005;

Picard and Robinson, 2006; Prentice and Andersen, 2003; Raj, 2003; Richards and Wilson, 2004; Roche, 2000). There can be several explanations behind these findings and the contradictions between the results of this study and previous studies. One explanation is the research type of previous studies which mostly focus on best practices and used case studies as a research method. Although the case study method gives detailed information about the studied object, it has limitations concerning generalizability.

Another explanation can be related to the size of the festivals in the current study, which included both smaller size local festivals and international festivals. Therefore, some of the surveyed festival managers may not see national or international visitors as potential participants. Moreover, the type of festival organizers can also influence the impact of a festival on the promotion of a city. As can be seen in Turkish cities, the municipalities of Izmir and Adana are the main organizers of the festivals. These institutions may focus on the community benefits and disregard the development capacity for city tourism of festivals. A further explanation can be the theme and content of the festivals in this study. According to several studies, festivals and events should have a theme that is different from their rivals in order to contribute to the image and attractiveness of the destination (Yeoman, Robertson, Ali-Knight, Drummond and McMahon-Beattie, 2004). Some of the festivals of the current study, however, have not any unique theme that differentiates them in the market. Several festivals in Adana and Izmir, for example, contain general celebrations of agricultural products in order to create a community soul. Moreover, when the festival themes in the three cities were evaluated, one can see that all of them have international film, art, and jazz festivals. Although these themes seem to be attractive, they tend to become a generic theme in the market. Thus, for example a key word search on “international jazz festivals” in google.com brought 13000 results! The first five pages of this search present Cape Town, Vancouver, Miri and Dubai, Melbourne, Glasgow international jazz festivals. At the third page of google research, Izmir Jazz festival is appeared. An internet search on the key words “international film festivals” produces similar results. The lack of uniqueness of the festival themes in the studied cities limits their effectiveness in supporting a differentiated promotion of the cities.

As a summary, the current study suggests that although cities organize several festivals the festival managers have a rather low rating of the impact of their festivals on the promotion and communication of the city. The studied festivals mostly seem to create a communication place for the community. The impact of festivals on the promotion and communication of the city in the country or in the international tourism market is much weaker. Furthermore, the study points out that when studying the impact of festivals, it is important to control for the aim, scope, theme and type of organizers of the studied festivals

Acknowledgements

The first author thanks *Swedish Institute* (SI) which supplied generous Post-Doc Scholarship and made it possible to make this research. The authors would like to thank the following individuals who have been of tremendous contribution to this research. Firstly, thank all those festivals managers who spent time on survey and answered the questions. The authors are also grateful to Ann-Christine Forsberg, Dzamila Bienkowska, and Lena Anderson for their excellent reviews on the Swedish version of the survey.

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MANAGING FESTIVAL SAFETY – A CASE STUDY OF THE STAVANGER FOOD FESTIVAL (THE GLADMATFESTIVAL) IN NORWAY

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Abstract

Festivals may gather high numbers of attendants, involve material goods, money and properties of considerable values, and may also be placed in surroundings that may be vulnerable for wear and tear of human activities and unplanned or disastrous events. The greater and more complicated the festival, the more potential risks are involved. Accidents and dramatic unwanted events may have negative or fatal consequences for participants and cause human suffering and death, and also seriously hurt the festival owners and the hosting municipality in several ways. To manage such risks, some festivals have started to employ risk analyses and risk management techniques, varying from shallow plans bought from consultants to proper risk analyses and management strategies involving the festival manager and staff.

The Stavanger Food Festival (the Gladmatfestival) provides the empirical context for a case study of this development. Established in 1999, the festival annually gathers 250.000 participants and 500 staff involved as exhibitors and the like in a small area in the harbour area in central Stavanger. A risk analyses showed that drowning, exposure to fire and explosions, excessive substance abuse, violence, public disorder, wind damaging the tents, intoxication caused by food or water and poor hygiene were central risk factors for those present at the venue, and some of were also potential risk factors for goods and property. Also, installing and removing the material structures of the festival involved high risks for accidents, human suffering and broken properties.

A management plan was developed to encounter these risks, applying principles from the offshore oil industry. While the plan was initiated by the festival, it was developed in concert with the Police being the responsible agent for emergency and rescue, and it also contributed to a learning process in the administration of the Stavanger municipality, which contributed in 2007 by launching a handbook for festival managers when applying for permission to use public space for festivals. The plan was communicated thoroughly through the festival organisation and discussed both up front and every day at the staff morning meetings.

Keywords: Festival safety, festival risk management, food festival, Gladmatfestival, Stavanger

Introduction

Festivals may gather high numbers of attendants in a limited area, involve material goods and properties of considerable values, and may also be placed in surroundings that may be vulnerable for wear and tear of human activities and unplanned or disastrous events. Equipments of various kinds, like tents, stages and scenes, have to be brought into the area and erected for the staging of the event, and to be removed after the celebrations. Performers and their equipment travels to and from the festival area along with crowds of audience, and the amount of participants makes it unlikely that individual security checks may be undertaken. One could hypothesize that the greater and more complicated the festival, the more potential risks are involved. Several authors (e.g. Allen, O'Toole, McDonnel & Harris, 2002; Bodwin, McDonald, Allen & Toole, 2001; Getz, 2005; Harrison & McDonald, 2004; Laybourn, 2004; McDonnell, Allen, O'Toole, 1999; Shone & Parry, 2001; Tarlow, 2002) argue that the positive impacts a well-organised festival may have on external images of a city and local profiling and self-esteem for its inhabitants may be reversed and seriously impaired by accidents and dramatic unwanted events at the festival venue. Moreover, accidents and dramatic unwanted events may have negative or fatal consequences for participants and cause human suffering and death, and also seriously hurt the festival owners and the hosting municipality in several ways. These authors also recommend that risk management techniques should be employed to prevent adverse events to take place, and guides on risk assessment and safety management have appeared (e.g. Danielsen, 2008; UK Health and Safety Executive, 2007). To manage such risks, some festivals have started to employ risk analyses and safety measures, varying from shallow plans bought from consultants to proper risk analyses and management strategies involving the festival manager and staff. However, to the best of our knowledge, so far no research has been published of risk and safety analysis and management in the context of festival management. The present article attempts to contribute to the opening of this area of research and to inform the authorities, festival managers and public in general on how risk management is applied in a festival context.

Adverse events examples from festivals and sports events

As no research-based overviews over adverse event examples are available, some illustrative examples have been traced monitoring newspapers and searching in media archives. The incidents found are not displaying a total overview of the risks of festival and event accidents but serve as illustrations of the potential hazards related to such arrangements. As can be observed from Table 1 they include injuries caused by collapsed material structures, fire and crowding in concert areas, but also accidents in the festival camp and in near-by areas. Alcohol and drugs enhances other risk factors.

Severe adverse effects may also happen during other events. Thus, at least 15 people have been killed and several hundreds injured in the bull fighting in Pamplona in Spain (http://www.dagbladet.no/2009/07/12/nyheter/festival/spania/utenriks/7163404/).

Table 1. Examples of adverse events at festivals: Characteristics, consequences, causes and comments.

Source	**Place and time**	**Adverse event**	**Consequences**	**Causes**	**Comments**
Bergesen, 2009; Hustad & Ittelin, 2009	Skiippagurra Festival, Norway 2009	Artist fell from scene while performing	Artist broke wrists and damaged neck. Artist injured and must cancel 20 concerts	Untidy back stage area and lack of safety fencing	Concert cancelled. Artist makes claims for compensation to organiser
Tvedten & Rasch, 2009	Pohoda Music Festival, Trencin in Slovakia	Festival tent collapsed	One participant died, 40 participants injured	Unsafe tent construction and bad weather	Festival terminated, 33.000 participants evacuated and emergency shelter provided
Fretteland, 2008	Norway Rock Festival 2008	Leak of diesel exhaust into caravan during night	Two participants died from suffocation, six brought to hospital seriously endangered. Confusion at the festival	Diesel aggregate used for producing electric energy in caravan during night	Festival continued after mourning, one band refused to perform, memorial fund created for the two orphans, safety effort increased for the 2009 event and no aggregates allowed
Amdal, 2007	Roskilde Festival 2007	Festival participant hit by a train	The visitor got both his legs cut off	The victim was excessively drunk and was walking on the railroad	
Eisenträger, 2007	Roskilde Festival 2007	Four participants injured in gas explosion	Severe burning injuries	Gas cooking devise exploded and started fire in the camp	

Fuglehaug, 2005	Roskilde Festival 2000	Crowding in front of scene during concert performance	Nine participants died from suffocation, tramped to death, eighteen injured	Only ongoing concert and too large audience, no protection against pressure from crowding, alcohol consumption	Festival continued, police investigation blamed the audience, case re-opened after complaints and the festival management questioned
Rønningen, 2000	Töreboda-festivalen, Sweden, 2000.	Crowding (10.000) during concert by Markoolio	Nine participants injured	The injured were hurt when pressed towards a safety fence in front of the scene	Concert continued
Source	**Place and time**	**Adverse event**	**Consequences**	**Causes**	**Comments**
Solbrække, 2000	Hultsfred Festival, Sweden, 1999	Crowding in front of scene during concert performance by Hole	One participant tramped to death	No protection against pressure from crowding (18.000). Band leader Courtney Love urged participants to come closer to the scene	
Solbrække, 2000	Minsk, Russia 1999	Crowding in front of scene during concert performance by Mango Mango	54 participant died		
Solbrække, 2000	Sao Paulo, Brasil 1997	Bridge fence fell down on concert audience	Panic, 8 participant died		
Solbrække, 2000	Düsseldorf, Germany,1997:	Crowding in front of scene during concert performance by Die toten Hosen	One participant died from suffocation after pressure from crowd, and 300 were injured		
Solbrække, 2000	Köln, Germany, 1997	Crowding in front of scene during concert	One participant died	The participant fell and was not able to get back on her feet, tramped to	

		performance		death	
Solbrække, 2000	Arad, Israel 1995	Panic in crowd during concert performance by Maschina	Two participant died and 150 participants were injured	Panic in crowd of 20.000 audiences. The two participant were tramped to death	
Solbrække, 2000	Gdansk, Poland, 1994	Fire at Rock Concert arranged in Ship Yard	Two participant died and 200 participants were injured	One died from fire, one was tramped to death by the panicking crowd	
Solbrække, 2000	Kristianopel, Sweden, 1981 (Valborgmesse eve)	Uncontrolled crowding at entrance for a performance by the Roxette star Per Gessle's band Gyllene Tider	Three participants died	The three participant were tramped to death while the audience entered the concert arena, insufficient control over the entrance	
Solbrække, 2000	Cincinatti, Ohio, US, 1979	Panicing crowd when the audience were leaving after a concert by The Who	11 participants died from suffocation or were tramped to death	Audience were unable to get out from the concert area	
Source	**Place and time**	**Adverse event**	**Consequences**	**Causes**	**Comments**
Solbrække, 2000	Altamont, California, US, 1969	Fighting between guards (Hell's Angels) and audience during Rolling Stones concert at festival	Coloured Meredith Hunter, was killed by the guards, and three other died from injuries during the battle that followed	The adverse event happened when the band played the Sympathy for the Devil. No more info on reasons available	

Likewise, soccer games have become severe safety challenges. Examples were the tragedy at the Ibrox Park, Glasgow in Scotland in 1971 where 66 people among the audience died from pressure during crowding at exit gates. In 1985, a fire in Valley Parada Stadium, Bradford in England, set on by children's play with matches in the stadium wooden constructions caused 53 fatalities (Lote, 2009). The 1985 Heysel Stadium Disaster, "the darkest hour in the history of the UEFA competitions", was caused by crowding, riots and fighting between supporter groups that led to collapse of material stadium structures; 39 died and more than 600 were injured (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heysel_Stadium_Disaster). Even worse was the Hillsborough tragedy in England in 1989 where altogether 96 Liverpool-supporters died and 766 were injured. The causes were panic and wrong decisions by the local police when huge crowds gathered in front of the entrances of the stadium, and also lack of police initiatives when the adverse event occurred (Lote, 2009). Like in festivals, crowding and fire seems to be major risk factors at sports events.

Mega-events like the Olympic Games have also been marred by tragedies. In the 1972 Summer Olympics in Münich, Germany, the "Munich massacre" caused the death of 11 Israeli athletes and coaches taken as hostages, and one policeman and five terrorists from Black September. In subsequent Olympics, increased security measures in the Olympic Villages and competition venues protected athletes but also diminished the festive and open atmosphere that is at the heart of the Olympism (http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/428005/Olympic-Games/59618/Munich-West-Germany-1972). Nevertheless, the Atlanta Olympics were marred by several threats from terrorism and experienced the Centennial Olympic Park bombing on July 27 1996 which caused two fatalities among spectators and wounded 111 others (Hultgren, 1998; Thoresen & Hansen, 1996). While the former was clearly a part of a larger political conflict the latter was more of an unpredictable one-man adventure.

Risk and risk management concepts and theories

The "risk archipelago" is rich with theories and interrelated terms and concepts, and is visited by engineers, psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, economists and students of government and law (Warner, 1992). The concept of *risk* relates to the Italian expression of *"ricicare"*, which was in use in the 13th century to denote the opportunities and dangers that merchant vessels were exposed to along foreign seashores (Bernstein, 1996), which was also the time of the rise of the insurance systems. In short risk may be defined as the *combination of possible consequences and related uncertainties* (Aven, 2007) or *the combination of the probabilities for an adverse event to occur and the consequences of that event* (ISO, 2002). Warner defines risk as

> *"…the probability that a particular adverse event occurs during a stated period of time, or results from a particular challenge […] Explicitly or implicitly, it must always relate to the risk of (a special event or set of events) and where appropriate must refer to an exposure to hazard specified in terms of its amount or intensity, time of starting or duration. [...] All risks are conditional, although often the conditions are implied by context rather than explicitly stated. […] An adverse event may be defined as an occurrence that produces harm. A hazard is the situation that in particular circumstances could lead to harm, where harm is the loss to a human being (or to a human population) consequent on damage, and damage is the loss inherent quality suffered by an entity (physical and biological)" (Warner, 1992, p. 2 – 3).*

A hazard or chains of hazards may function as causes that initiate or elicit the adverse event itself (Figure 1), which in turn leads to consequences that may aggravate the effects of the adverse event. A *hazard* is the potential for adverse consequences of some primary event or sequence of events or combination of circumstances that could occur, and risk is the chance of a defined hazard occurring. Risk reduction may be facilitated by implementing risk assessment procedures, specifying which adverse events that may occur, how they relate to certain hazards or chains of hazards, how likely they are to happen, and how severe their consequences may be. *Risk assessment* may be defined as the integrated analysis of risks inherent in a product, system or plant and their significance in an appropriate context. It includes two main areas of activities: 1) Risk estimation which is the identification of the outcomes, the estimation of the magnitude of the associated consequences of these outcomes, and the probabilities of these outcomes. 2) Risk evaluation is the process of determining the significance or value of the identified hazards and estimated risks to those concerned with or affected by the decision. As a contrast, s*afety*, relates to freedom from risks that are unacceptable or harmful to a person, or group, either local to the hazard or in a wider context. The situation and activities containing the risk may also bring *benefits,* which denote the gains to a human or human population (Warner, 1992).

The expression of "risk management" originates form two Italian terms: The *management* term comes from the Italian verb *"maneggiaree"* meaning to ride a horse with skill; however, this may be a misleading metaphor since risk is ubiquitous and no human activity is risk free or safe (Hood, Jones, Pidgeon, Turner & Gibson, 1992). At the most general level, *risk management* can be understood in the terms of organisational control theory including setting (explicit or implicit) goals, gather and interpret information, and act to influence human behaviour and / or physical structures. The overall subject area, also called loss prevention, is concerned with hazard identification, risk analysis, risk criteria and risk acceptability, thus risk management deals with processes of decision making, regarding the acceptance of an assessed risk and / or the implementation of actions to reduce the probability of occurrence or its consequences. In an event and festival context risk management may be seen as the process of anticipating, preventing, or minimizing potential costs, losses or problems for the event, organisation, partners and guests (Getz, 2005, pp. 284-285; see also Getz, 2007, p.291). The process includes data collection, evaluation, decision-making and implementation of means to reduce or eliminate the risks anticipated (Tarlow, 2002).

The implementation of a risk management approach is legitimised by the normative *"Vorsorgeprinzip"* – the Precautionary Principle – stating that an activity must not be undertaken if there is a significant uncertainty about its consequences, and some of these may be serious. Moreover, to keep the risks *"As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP)"* (Hood, Jones, Pidgeon, Turner & Gibson, 1992), means and barriers must be implemented to hinder the adverse event to occur and / or minimise its consequences, if no gross disproportion of the relationships between costs and disadvantages on the one side, and the benefits from those means, have been demonstrated (Löfstedt, 2003; NOU 2000). Risk assessment and consequent managerial actions are the tools that festival managers employ to increase the *robustness of their system.* This may be achieved by installing barriers to hinder the initiating events to take place and, if it does, other barriers may have been installed to reduce the consequences and their impacts (Figure 1). Such *barriers* may be of various kinds, including symbolic (i.e. signs), organisational (i.e. procedures), functional (i.e. gates to be opened and closed) and physical (i.e. physical barriers and fences). Lack of barriers or ineffective barriers increases the *vulnerability of a system,* which may then be seen as the *combination of possible consequences and related uncertainties given that the system is exposed to the threats and causes that potentially may elicit the adverse event.*

Departing from sociology, Tarlow (2002) argues that in a festival context, risk and safety management may be discussed within three different theoretical models. First, from a *functionalist* perspective, a festival may be seen as a social system constituted by interlocking components. A change in one of them, for instance, due to an adverse event, will be likely to influence the rest of the system. This principle applies especially to the chain of *hazard / cause – adverse event – consequences model* displayed in Figure 1, which touches on the kernel of the risk assessment principles (Warner, 1992). Second, festival safety may be seen from a *conflict* theory perspective, which assumes that as any social system a festival has a high potential for competitions and even conflicts between and within locales, and creates winners and losers. Such conflicts may be the antecedents (hazards / causes); the adverse event; or the consequence in the model portrayed in Figure 1. Third, Tarlow (2002) argues that the perspectives of *symbolic interactionism* have relevance to festival risk and safety management since festivals exist by creating experiences and images. Hence, the packaging of collective memories and associating them to time and place as images is the central long-term outcome for festival participants. The occurrence of adverse events and their consequences may impair the images of both the festival and its hosting municipality.

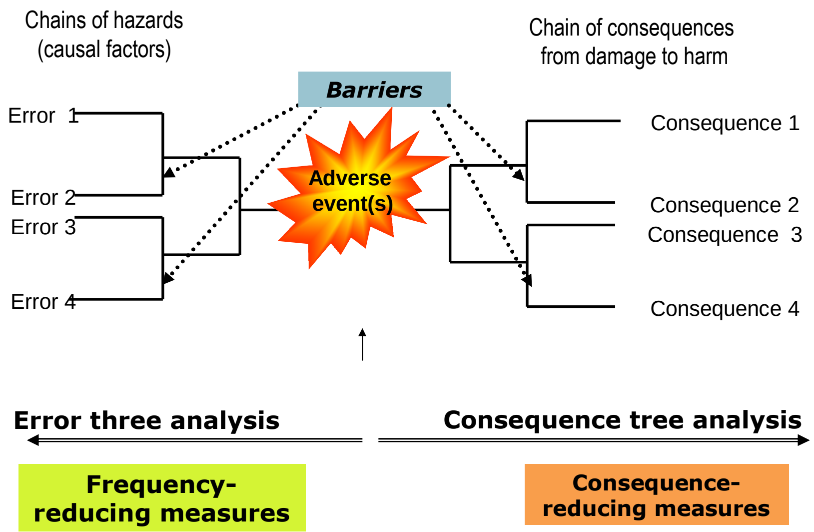

Figure 1: The flow model of risk and safety analyses. Adverse events denote the negative outcome of (chains of) hazards or errors that may occur (causal factors, left side of model). On the right side of the model the consequences (damages and harm) of the adverse event are illustrated. Barriers may be employed to a) reduce the frequency of the causal factors, and / or reduce the consequences of a possible adverse event.

Compared to other organisations, festivals may have unique problems in relation to safety management. First, it is inherent in the festivals' raison d'être for participants and possibly artists, staff and organisers to behave in variance with conventional norms:

> *"At festival times, people do something they normally do not: they abstain from something they normally do; they carry to the extreme behaviours that are usually regulated by measure; they invert patterns of daily social life. Reversal, intensification, trespassing, and abstinence are the four cardinal points of festive behaviour"* (Falassi, 1987, p. 3).

This "festivality" has a resemblance to the liminoid concept in Turner's (1969) classical work on tourism, tourism culture proposed by Jafari (1987), and Ryan's (2002) observations of tourism as a liminoid phenomenon; all of which are pointing at cultures that are different from that of ordinary life, to time out of ordinary time, and experiences shaped outside of ordinary social processes with room for fun and idiosyncratic behaviour. Spectacular activities, idyllic sunsets and a great party ambience with crowds of attendants may commonly be experienced at festivals, but some of these situations may endanger the individuals' health and safety and the interests, images and properties of organisations and municipalities as they may limit or play down the normative effects of the ordinary social control in a society, hence raising risk levels (Getz, 2007; Layburn, 2004; Tarlow, 2002). Second, although celebrations may be as old as mankind (Falassi, 1987), festivals in their frequent occurrences and rejuvenated forms (Kwok-bun & Sai-shing, 2005) are new types of organisations that may lack experiences in how to manage safely, at least in a Nordic setting. They are often run by one or few persons, who may be festival managers in a part-time or even unpaid, voluntary position. Even small festivals are complex organisations involving several subgroups like visitors, entertainers and / or exhibitors, untrained volunteers side by side with some paid workforce (Andersson, Carlsen, Ali-Knight, Jaeger, Mykletun & Taylor, 2008) for different tasks like erecting and taking down the constructions like scenes and tents, selling tickets and controlling entrances, and serving beverages and food. They must interact with local authorities to be allowed to use public space, and obey rules and regulations enforced by the local authorities. Even though handbooks with guidelines have appeared (e.g. UK Health and Safety Executive, 2007)) it is unclear to what extent and how festival managers work with risk and safety management. As risk and safety management may be given rather shallow attention in stable and well-established organisations, it is most likely to expect that this realm of concern is rather peripheral for festival managers. Hence, the research problems of this paper addressed three main questions: A) How are the risk and safety management addressed and organised in a festival context? B) Which risks are assessed and how are they evaluated? C) How are the identified risks handled in a festival context?

Method

As no studies have been published in this area, a case study approach was deemed appropriate since the case study design allows for *"…in-depth examinations of many features of few units (…) over duration of time, allowing for detailed, varied and extensive data and allowing the use of multiple methods"* (Neuman, 2003, p. 33) to reveal insights into a phenomenon (Yin, 1994) which here was defined as the festival risk management. The design allows to *"… demonstrate a causal argument about how general social forces shape and produce results in particular settings"* (Walton, 1992, p. 122). The study employed a mixed methods approach (Brewer and Hunter, 1989; Creswell, 2003). Like the use of replications within experimental research, repeated case studies under varying conditions may facilitate generalizations (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003; Yin, 1994); hence, this study calls for similar investigations in new contexts and also with unsuccessful festivals to further our understanding of festival risk management procedures and practices. The case study approach also allows for generating hypotheses that later may be research with other designs.

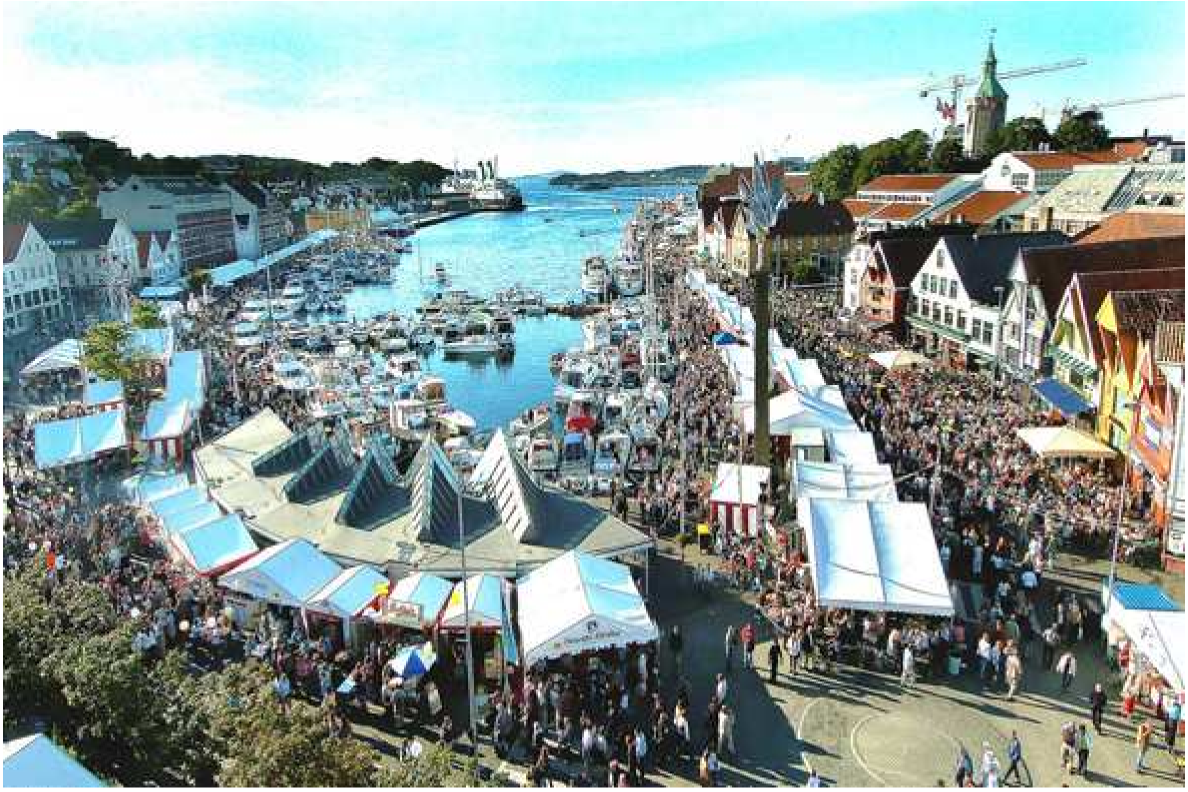

Figure 2: The place and space of Gladmat 2005. In the buildings on the right and left sides of the bay are restaurants. The white tarps cover the exhibition stands. The small boats in the harbour were not allowed after the 2005 Festival and were replaced by the larger Veteran Boat Festival.

The case that informed the study was the risk management at the Stavanger Food Festival (Gladmatfestivalen) in Stavanger, Norway (Figure 2). Being arranged annually since 1999 for four days during late July, the Gladmatfestival is one of the oldest and also the largest festival of the Stavanger region (Einarsen & Mykletun, 2009). At the outset the festival promoted local food and aimed at becoming the national event within its theme and a hallmark event (Getz, 2007) for its region, and also for the food and meal production of the area. The name itself means “happy food” and alludes to the idea of meal enjoyment, raising awareness about meals and food quality, and intending to create public interests and demand for, and consumption of quality food. The actual celebration occurs in the meeting between the exhibitors, visitors, artists and professional chefs who take part in the event and consumption of food, beverages, activity programs, parties, parades and entertainments. Its venue is the harbour at the centre of the town Stavanger (Figure 2). Different projects such as shows with multiple courses dinners, food workshops for children, food theatres and national and international championships are arranged by the festival. The 2009 event roomed 120 strictly selected exhibitors, representing a wide range of different food. A large variety of meals were offered and the festival attracted about 250.000 visitors.

Data were collected through personal interviews, newspapers, documents, Internet resources and participative observation. Open interviews were made with the festival manager (abbreviated FM in the text below), the festival risk manager (FRM), the festival technical manager (MTM), the

Municipality Event Coordinator (MEC; an officer empowered by the Mayor with the official authority to control the festivals), the Chief Police Officer at Stavanger Police Station (PHO), the Police task-force on guard during the festival, and the Rover Rescue Group (RRG) from the Madlaspeiderne (a local boys' scout troop who had set up a professional rescue organisation). These interviews lasted for 1 - 2 hours each and were either electronically recorded or notes were taken. In addition, several shorter dialogues were kept, and short interviews were also made with the ambulance manager and officers from the fire brigade.

Observation was performed at the festival office, in safety meetings and inspections, and on the venue through all four days of the festival. Notes were taken regarding significant issues and compared with the interview data. This unobtrusive way of collecting data increased the likelihood that the subjects' behaviour would remain unaltered (Kellehear, 1993; Ticehurst and Veal, 2000). This freedom of "seeing without being seen" afforded insights into insiders' perspectives and thoughts (Guba and Lincoln, 1994), which added to the validity of the findings. Observation provided a more complete understanding of the context in which problems and challenges arose during the short time frame of the festival, thus achieving "*… much fuller and more accurate insight into a situation than would otherwise be possible*" (Vinten, 1994, p. 34). Misinformation, inconsistencies and evasions in the interviews could more easily be detected (Neuman, 2003), and a more precise overview of episodes described by informants could be achieved.

Electronic archives of the main national newspapers were searched for reports on the event, while manual searches were made of the archives of the local newspapers *Stavanger Aftenblad* and *Rogalands Avis*. Important documents like the safety meetings agenda and minutes, and the Police Festival Permission documents were examined. Texts from the documents, newspapers, interviews and observations were analysed along two main principles. The first analyses were *open coding* to identify information relevant to the *a priori* set themes with regards to established theory. However, due to the explorative character of the study analysis of *emerging themes* was just of equal importance. Second, the researcher used *selective coding* to compare and contrast findings and underpin the concepts and theoretical structures that finally led to the conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Neuman, 2003).

Results

Emerging concerns about safety at the Gladmatfestival

Concerns for risk management rose within the Gladmatfestival as a consequence of hazards and criticism on one side, and also demands from the police and the municipality and from observing harm and damages caused by adverse events at other festivals. In the 2005 Gladmatfestival a private small boat overloaded with partying people sank by the dock during the busiest festival hours. The adverse event itself caused crowding at the dock side, and the crowding increased as the police boat patrolling the harbour turned on their sirens and blue light and arrived to the place. In the meantime the boat owner called a rescue crane to lift the boat out of the water before the material damages became too severe. A huge lorry with a crane drove into the increasingly crowded area which imposed new risks to the festival participants (Figure 3). It is unclear who gave the lorry access to the area, but the police officers on duty were inexperienced and did not interfere with this rescue operation (FRM). No serious harm was caused to humans. Afterwards it was revealed that for several years these small boats had been a nuisance for the festival: "*People in the small private boats in the harbour have their own "festival" outside the official one. This constitutes a risk. The harbour authorities are responsible for* *what happens on the sea, but they do not care. The festival got the blame as the accident was apparently within the festival area. From 2006 and onwards the festival hired all rights to the sea in the harbour, closed the area for the small private boats and rented the inner harbour to the Veteran Boat Festival which mainly solved the small boat issue*" (FM1).The rumours of this adverse event spread to other harbour-based festivals in the region and especially the fear of fires and explosions in the boats alarmed the authorities. On more recent festivals the police patrols in the area have been managed by senior, experienced staff (PHO).

The 2007 Gladmatfestival had to close for some hours due to heavy rainstorms. Fortunately the storms started at night and nobody except the guards on duty was present in the festival area. Parts of tents, equipment, refrigerators and furniture were spread around by the strong winds and some material damage was made. The main reason for the damage was insufficient anchorage of tents and other equipment, and new standards for securing the installations were required. As the municipality does not accept any bolts to be hammered into the ground, the new anchorages had to be concrete blocks in sufficient numbers and weight compared to the size of the object that should be secured. One consequence of this was increased use of trucks during the construction and de-construction of the festival area, and it also became more difficult to move tents or other equipment during the festival hours as no vehicles were allowed into the area during the opening hours (FRM; MEC).

The hosting municipality of Stavanger as a counterpart and context to the risk management task and in the Gladmatfestival

The counterpart of the Gladmatfestival in the issues of risk management was the Stavanger Municipality administration, The Police Station in Stavanger and other public services. As an event organiser use public space in the town centre, the organiser had to apply for a permit from the Mayor of Stavanger and Stavanger Police Office, and the event had to be accepted by the municipal health authorities (ambulance service and acute medicine clinic), the Southern Rogaland Fire Brigade, the Food Authorities, the Beverage Sale Authorities, and the Greater Stavanger Port Authority (Figure 3). To simplify the application process the municipal administration had provided a special service for event organisers. The office, which is located in the Stavanger Municipality Department for Environmental and Developmental Issues, is fronted by an officer fully dedicated to the role as Municipality Event Coordinator. From 2007 and onwards, this office had offered a web-based manual or handbook for event organisers presenting demands and regulations together with related forms to fill in to present all aspects of their case. Among these was also a risk analysis form. The handbook and application forms apply to all public spaces in town except the Stavanger Concert Hall. This office also coordinated the cooperation between the various public agencies like the Traffic Control Office (blocking streets and reorganising traffic and car parking; distribution of electricity and water, collection of waste and cleaning of streets) in order to provide service and support for the organisers while also raising the technical and procedural quality of the events.

Figure 3. Rescue operation in harbour during the most crowded festival hours, 2005.

This service was supposed to give Stavanger a competitive advantage as a festival town (MEM). The Stavanger Police Station reviewed all documents with special emphasise on the risk analysis and risk management, alcohol policy and opening hours and gave the final permits to run the festival. They fully supported the ideology of the municipality regarding festivals and service:

> *"The role of the police is to increase safety in a broad sense without intruding on the fun and festive atmosphere in the town. Also the police force shall contribute to the high level of service in Stavanger and add to the efforts of making Stavanger a good host for festival organisers"* (HPO).

The structure of the risk management tasks and taskforces of the Gladmatfestival 2009 - organising for effective risk management

The risk management organisation of the Gladmatfestival was a complex structure serving the broad tasks of analysing risks and presenting a plan and a taskforce to secure the festival according to the risk analysis (Figure 4). They set up a temporary festival office close to the festival entrance with an operation centre manned by the Director of the Gladmatfestival Board, the General festival manager and her deputy, media manager, photographer, festival risk manager, festival technical manager, and assistants. The office also contained a meeting room where the festival safety meetings were held.

The festival's own taskforce consisted of the festival manager who was responsible for all aspects of the festival including risk management. For support the manger had a risk and safety committee with a risk and safety manager who also was a leader of the Rover Rescue Group involved, and a technical manager. The technical manager was assisted by technical staff hired from an athlete organisation. As a preparedness measure in case of adverse events, the committee was extended to include the festival deputy manager, two members of the Rover Rescue Group, and five staff members who in case of a major adverse event were responsible for: a) media contacts; b) fronting festival visitors; c) the Rover Rescue Group; d) welfare for families of possible victims or hurt persons; and e) for log updates, respectively.

The risk and safety manager and the technical managers were then responsible for the risk and safety aspects related to a) the planning and use of space for the physical installations at the festival, b) the process of installing the tents and needed infrastructures, c) the actual operation of the festival, and d) the deconstruction and handover of the area used to its owner in a clean and tidy condition when the festival was finished. The companies renting tents and other equipment to the exhibitors and the festival, and the exhibitors themselves, had to document health- and safety procedures for their activities, and follow the instructions given by the festival risk manager and festival technical manager.

The festival's own risk management task force was in constant interaction with the services provided by the police, the fire brigade, the health authorities, the Municipality Event Coordinator and the Municipality Traffic Office, and the guards hired by the festival. A command centre (CO-centre) was established in a mobile barrack with clear sings posted on its walls, close to the main entrance of the festival area, and this centre served as the main meeting point during the festival. The area was also fully supervised by video cameras controlled by the police in their Operation Centre at the police station.

To respond to the hazards of fire as a risk factor, fire extinguishers had to be installed in all tents. Propane gas and charcoal fires should be at distance from flammable material and visitors at distance from hot surfaces, and there should be a four metres broad street for emergency vehicles like fire engines, ambulances and police cars. These rules were enforced strictly by the festival risk manager and festival technical manager as well as the Rover Rescue Group patrols. Officers from the fire brigade also patrolled the area and had daily checks on measures to prevent fires and the preparedness for their handling if they should occur. A fire engine was parked by the CO-centre and also a specially equipped fire engine boat was present in the harbour most of the festival hours.

Accidents with damage to humans (visitors, exhibitors, staff or guards) were among the hazards that required several types of barriers served by several groups. As a response to this the Rover Rescue Group had a first-aid group with several members on duty during the festival hours. They had advanced first-aid skills and were set up with a broad range of first-aid equipment including a defibrillator placed in their first-aid barrack by the Co-centre. They also patrolled the harbour with a zodiac. To make it easier to retrieve lost kids and unite them with their parents they offered name tags with parents' cell phone numbers to attach to the kid's wrist, and a meeting point where lost persons should show up to be united with their group. The health authorities were also present with a fully equipped ambulance placed at the CO-centre. Added to these were guards hired from a company specialising on stand-in services. On request from the police they were given a three hours course in festival guards functions offered at the police station by the police in cooperation with the fire brigade and the health authorities. In line with the practices from the last six years, this guard function should initially have been served by members of an athlete organisation. Alas, as these volunteers were unable to document attendance on the type of course required by the police they were replaced in the last minute by the professional stand-in company, and to a higher cost for the festival. In case of adverse events with damage to humans, the guards were instructed to call on the ambulance and the first aid group, protect the victim(s) from the audience and pave ways for the ambulance.

As offence to the public order, terrorism, violence and crime were hazards; the guards were supported by the ordinary police force in the town and in addition also a special patrol of three – four policemen lead by an experienced senior officer, present from 1400 – 2400 every day. One or two police cars were parked by the CO-centre. A guard boat from a professional guard company ("Viking") patrolled the harbour, and the police also had a manned uniformed police boat in the harbour most of the time. Finally, the Coastguard was present with an armed vessel at the entrance of the harbour from Thursday to Sunday. The guards and the Rover Rescue Group had equipment handy for fencing off areas in case of an adverse event. The festival guards watched the festival area during the night, and after midnight the routine police patrols were on call.

Communication was secured by written procedures and advanced technology including WHF, mobile phones and the Rover Rescue Group also had satellite telephones, the latter because of expected breakdowns of the ordinary telecommunications in case of a crisis. All exhibitors should have their alarm and risk handling procedures placed centrally in their tents, clearly visible for themselves and the visitors, and know how to handle unexpected situations an alarm the risk and safety manger. All guards, the festival risk manager and the festival technical manger, and the Rover Rescue Group should wear cloths that made them easy to identify, and also have cards with telephone numbers and information about procedures handy.

As the services provided by the police, the fire brigade and the health authorities were considered as extraordinary compared to their ordinary duties, their institutions charged fees to the festival for their contributions. These fees amounted to about 22,000 NOK for the health authorities and the fire brigades respectively and up to 165,000 NOK for the police. The festival also paid for the work of the technical manager and the risk and safety manager, the assistance from the Rover Rescue Group and the professional stand-in service guides.

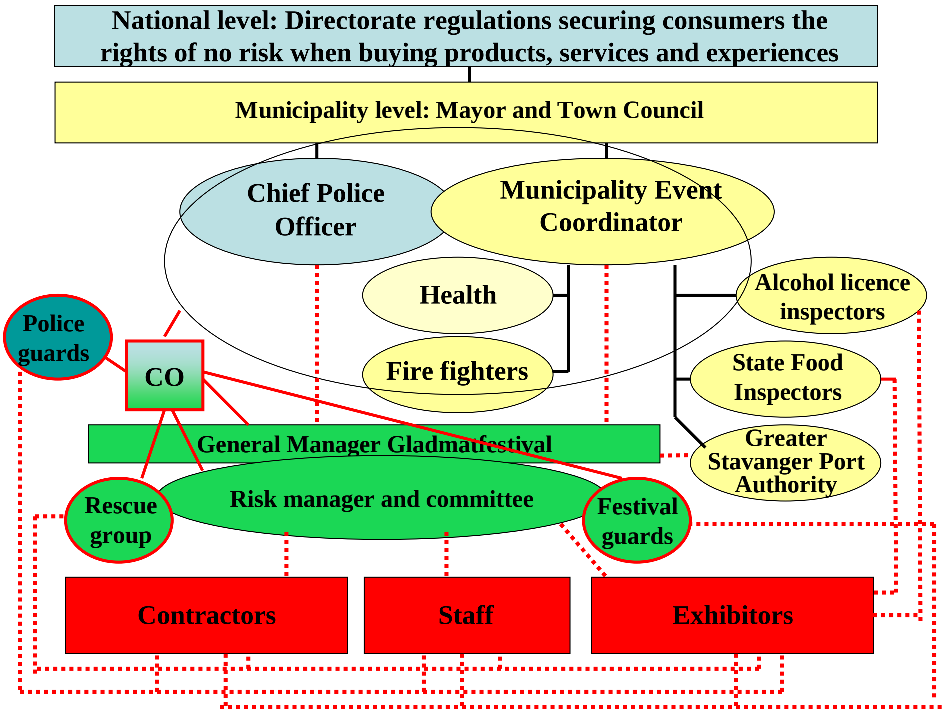

Figure 4. The structure of the Gladmatfesitval risk management task-force and their counterparts in the municipality administration and police force.

The risk analysis the Gladmatfestival

From the onset and up to 2004 the risk analyses and risk management plan was a document adapted from the petroleum industry. It was a heavy document that nobody felt ownership to; hence it was placed on the shelf. From 2005 a Rover Scout Group form the Madlaspeiderne took over the task of making a new approach to the risk management of the festival. Their approach was quite practical, departing from their experience of risk management at large Rover Rescue Group camps. A new risk analyses were set up and revised annually contingent upon the evaluation of the event. A documentation of the festival risk management organisation was also developed. The 2009 Gladmatfestival risk analysis demonstrated that drowning, exposure to fire and explosions, excessive substance abuse, violence, public disorder, wind damaging the tents, intoxication caused by food or water and poor hygiene were central risk factors for those present at the venue, and some of were also potential risk factors for goods and property. Also, installing and removing the material structures of the festival involved high risks for accidents, human suffering and broken properties. The outcome of the analysis is briefly displayed in Table 2. Only minor adjustments were made to the 2009 analyses as compared to the 2008-version.

After identifying the possible adverse events and evaluating their likelihood of occurrence and their expected consequences, a summary table of the risk analysis could be set up as displayed in Table 3. Examples of the full table reviewing the risk analysis is displayed in Table 4 including adverse events, their hazard (causal factors), likelihood (probability of occurrence), and barriers (means to prevent the adverse event or reduce its consequences).

Table 2. Overview of the outcome of the risk analysis of the Gladmatfestival in 2009. The numbers identifies the adverse events in relation to the risk assessment and evaluations in Tables 3 and 4

Number	Adverse events	Number	Adverse events
1	Fire in or close to tents	13	Breakdown of water or power supply
2	Fire i garbage	14	Small incidents / injuries
3	Fire / explosion in boat	15	Damage by fire
4	Fire / explosion caused by gas used for heating	16	Children got lost
5	Crowding during scene shows	17	Fire caused by using gas for cooking
6	Panic	18	Food poisoning
7	Violence and offence to public order	19	Tents broken down by strong wind
8	Sabotage, terror, hostages taken	20	Accidents on park picnic
9	Person in the sea	21	Fire in the party tent on the roof of building 6
10	Collapse of constructions in tents or scene	22	Person falling down from the party tent on the roof of building 6
11	Blocked exit and emergency corridors or fire hose outlets	23	Accidents on arrangement at Dalsnuten (mountain peak)
12	Breakdown of telecommunication after	24	Accidents under construction / de-construction

Table 3. Chart displaying the combinations of likelihood of adverse events and the severity of their expected consequences from the risk evaluations at the Gladmatfestival 2009. Numbers refer to the adverse events listed in Table 2

Likelihood	**Consequences** *(Numbers in cells refers to the listing in the risk analysis)*				
	Low danger	Some danger	Dangerous	Critical	Catastrophically
Very likely	16	14, 15		11	
Likely		1, 9, 12		1	
Less likely		7, 18, 20, 23	21,24	17, 19	
Unlikely		5, 13	22		3, 4, 6, 8, 10

Risk management at the Gladmatfestival as a process

The risk management task of the Gladmatfestival was organised as a concerted effort with several players within the festival organisation and between the festival and the host municipality of Stavanger. Each year the festival organiser has to present an application for the permission to organise the event to the Stavanger municipality by the Municipality Event Coordinator. Included in this application was also the risk analysis, which should be renewed every year. The application for 2009 should be turned in as early as possible, and the risk and safety manager spent about three full weeks to prepare his part of the documentation. The Stavanger Municipality enforced the regulations strictly and in detail through their procedures before issuing the permissions of the event by the Department for Business and signed by the Mayor on June 12th. The permission for use of a clearly defined part of the public space was signed by the manager of the Department for Environmental and Developmental Issues and the Municipality Event Coordinator on July 13th. In these documents the Gladmatfestival were given exclusive rights for exhibitions, entertainment and sale in the marked area, and rules were given for sale of beverage, opening hours, use of loudspeaker installations, access, traffic and vehicle load, and with reference to rules and control procedures set by the Police, Fire-brigade, Health Authorities, State Food Inspection, and Alcohol Licence Inspection. The Police Department of Operations and Public Order issued the final commission for the event to take place, referring to the permissions by the Municipality and the municipal agencies involved, and also listing the services that he police would provide as part of the festival risk management system. This final permission for the event was sign on July 15th , and the final protocol from the police was signed on July 21st by the Head of the Stavanger Police Station, Section for Operation and Public Order.

Table 4. Examples of details for three adverse events from the risk analysis of the Gladmatfestival 2009

Adverse event	Hazard	Probability or likelihood	Consequences	Barriers / Means to prevent the adverse event or reduce its consequences
No. 1 Fire in tent	Human error Energy supply Pyromania	Likely to happen	Critical to visitors, equipment and buildings	<u>Preventing the occurrence of adverse event</u> Training, communication, equipment, inspections <u>Reducing consequences of adverse event</u> Fire extinguishers, fire hoses, exit routes, alarm routines
No. 9: Person in the water in the harbour area	Bathing (voluntarily), pushed into the water, intoxicated by alcohol or drugs, urinating into the water from the dock	Likely to happen	Some danger	<u>Preventing the occurrence of adverse event</u> Sufficient space along between tents and the dock side, fencing the dock side where most critical, no narrow spaces to hide between installations (tents) and dock side, controlling beverage sale and consumption <u>Reducing consequences of adverse event</u> Sufficient number of observant guards trained for rescue, sufficient amount of rescue equipment at the dock side (responsibility of the Harbour Authorities), guards on a fast boat ("Viking", hired by the festival), Rover Rescue Group with zodiac patrolling the harbour
No. 11: Blocked emergency and exit routes	Crowding Goods deliveries, Cars, Illegal tent expansions	Almost inevitable	Critical in case of emergency, fire or panic	<u>Preventing the occurrence of adverse event</u> All goods del between 0600 and 1100, expanding the exhibition area, open spaces, marking of emergency corridors, continuous inspections and control <u>Reducing consequences of adverse event</u> Immediate call the police patrol, removing / tow-away of cars

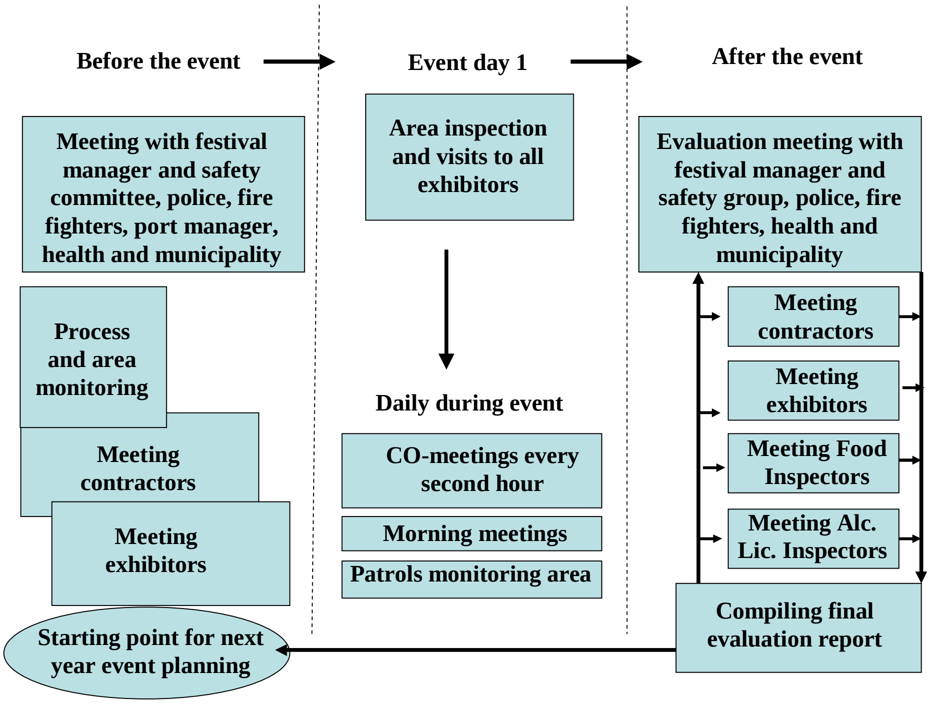

Figure 5. Flow of the risk management process of the Gladmatfestival: Main meetings and communications before, during and after the event.

The plan and risk analysis for the 2009 event were discussed in mid June in a meeting between the Gladmatfestival (general manager and risk and safety committee) and the Municipality Event Coordinator, the Head of the Police Office, the Port Authorities, the Southern Rogaland Fire Brigade and the health authorities (Figure 5). According to the minutes from this meeting, traffic regulations, training of guards, and sign-posts were discussed and some changes were to be made to the risk analyses. The minutes also states that the fire brigade wanted to test the emergency passages in the festival areas with their fire engines every morning, *preferably* before the festival opened. The health authorities made a point of that *they should be the first to be called upon in case of person damage*, and that the guards from the Rover Rescue Group (serving as first-aid rescue team) *might* be alarmed afterwards. Last year propane gas containers for cooking had been discovered stored in hotel rooms rented by exhibitors during the festival, and also containers of unacceptable quality had been used. The exhibitors should be strictly informed about rules for these gas containers, which should be stored in a special place at the outskirt of the festival area. The Port Authorities should *try* to develop information leaflets for private small-boats that were not allowed to enter and dock in the harbour during the festival. An examination of the festival area should be undertaken by the police, fire brigade and health authorities on the morning of the festival opening. The festival risk and safety manger should reassure that all issues regarding risk and safety were handled by then (Minutes from Meeting with Authorities, June 15th); (hence he had to make a first inspection before the main inspection commenced (FRM)).

Between the meeting with the authorities and the onset of the festival, the risk and safety manager and the technical manager were busy planning the layout and use of space and interacting with the contractors raising tents and constructing the festival arena, and also meeting the exhibitors (Figure 5) (FRM; FTM). Although clear instructions were given up front, several installations were placed in ways that blocked the emergency passages, and consequently had to be removed after the inspections by the festival risk manager and the entire group of the festival risk manager, the festival technical manager, the Head of the Police Office, the fire brigade, the health authorities and the Municipality Festival Coordinator on the opening day. *"These are the most hectic days of my work. I have to be out directing and making corrections all the time"* (FRM).

Every morning during the festival a safety meeting was held at the temporary festival office. These meetings were attended by the Director of the Gladmatfestival Board, the General festival manager and her deputy, the media manager, the festival technical manager, the festival risk manager and the Head of the Police Station. This meeting discussed all problems and potential risk factors reported and how to avoid hazards, hider adverse events and increase the service and pleasantness of the festival. Moreover, to secure communication flows, the police officers, the festival risk manager, the festival technical manager, the Scout Rover group, the fire brigade officers and ambulance officers met by the Co-centre every second hour between 14.00 and 24.00 to exchange information (Observation).

Actual risks and risk-related problems detected and their management during the 2009 Gladmatfestival

Although well prepared some episodes related to risk and safety occurred during the festival. None of them led to serious adverse events. The greatest potential hazard happened during the night before the festival when a man with a knife threatened several people on the street next to the festival area. The police arrested him and secured the area. During the festival there were few instances of disturbance of common order. Concerns were concentrated on several gipsies selling items inside the festival area and behaving in ways that were felt as threatening by the visitors. They were told to move out by the police, and when they refused to obey, they were exiled from the town. A second concern was exhibitors, restaurants and veteran boats playing music with high volumes disturbing the neighbouring area. In absence of measures showing decibel levels, this became a matter repeated complaints, transgressions and dispute, and finally the police had to command a shut-down for some of the places. Pick-pocketing was a problem and warnings were given with flyers and signs posted around the area. Several small boats entered the area had to be towed out by the "Viking" or gently asked to leave if the crew was found (Observation).

One of the festival highlights was the festive dinner in a huge party tent raised on the roof of a large shed in the harbour, seating 250 visitors. The installations were taken over from the previous festival in the town centre, but a part of it had been removed. On the opening day the fire brigade claimed that the emergency exits were calibrated for 150 visitors only, and that immediate action had to be taken to avoid the evening party to be cancelled. The company responsible for raising the tent and constructing the emergency staircases referred to their safety consultants who had recommended the solution in its present state. The festival manager claimed that the fire brigade had got all information up front and had made no objections to the plans. The compromise was to have the company responsible for the tent raising an extra emergency staircase and make a new emergency exit in the tent. As this could be made the next day some organisational changes had to be made for the first evening party, namely to instruct carefully about the emergency exit problem at the opening of the dinner party, and also having special crew in place to cut extra emergency exits in the tent by knives to let the visitors out in case of fire or other adverse events. The construction of the extra staircase for the two remaining evenings amounted to an expense of 12,000 NOK for the festival (Observation).

Exhibitors repeatedly tried to expand their areas and were repeatedly told to pull back to the area they were given. Their expansion narrowed the passages for the visitors, increased the risk of crowding and blocked the emergency streets:

> *"It is mainly the same people every time. Some have the habit of not paying the exhibition fees, some arrive too late, some expand their areas into the emergency corridors, and some turn on the music too high"* (FRM).

The veteran boats docking in the festival area contributed to this problem by placing their gangways into the areas that were meant for passages for visitors, disturbing the flow and increasing the risk of crowding. This was a matter of fact that had to be accepted, but changes should be in place before next year festival. All exhibitors were informed about the rules of securing the tents by solid concrete anchorages, but they also had to shelter their food exhibitions against possible droppings from birds and other airborne pollutions, so some of them raised tent and tarp constructions that did not match the rules given in advance. Some also erected tents without anchorage to protect visitors in case of rain. The latter had to be removed, but the tents and tarps sheltering the food were accepted, thus compromising the safety on this point (Observation).

The State Food Inspection Authorities made un-announced controls and found inadequate temperatures in the mobile storages. The State Food Inspection leaked this news to the newspaper Stavanger Aftenblad that displayed it as a scandal across two pages. This caused aggravation at the festival administration as the General Manager claimed to be informed directly about this type of problems and not through the media. Some outlets were closed and some exhibitors were forced to throw away valuable food. The Alcohol Licence Inspections found few transgressions of rules within the festival area; however, in the neighbouring restaurants there more practices were sanctioned. Relative to the high density of visitors in the town during the festival there were less disturbance to public order than observed on ordinary weekends (PHO).

Risk management as a learning process

After the festival, the festival risk manager made a report to the General festival manager about the experiences with the risk and safety aspects of the festival. The report was discussed with the police, the fire brigade, the health authorities and the festival coordinator from the municipality, and revisions were made. Inputs were also received from the reports from the State Food Inspectors and the Alcohol Licence Inspectors. A revised document was then accepted as the final report from the festival. This report was shared with exhibitors and contractors and made available as part of the planning documents for the next years' festival. Thus a learning process was established where experiences might be accumulated and contribute to better safety performance the following year.

Conclusion

Albeit the festival mode by its very nature may be the opposite of safety and risk management, the case study showed that festival risk management may be implemented. The study also demonstrates how this implementation may be organised. However, absence of serious adverse events at the festival setting cannot demonstrate the effectiveness of the festival risk management regime, as the observed absences of serious adverse events may be as well demonstrate that the risk analyses were inadequate and the expected hazards were irrelevant. Moreover, the absence of adverse events may also be the outcome of luck, experience and successful management otherwise; hence it is hard to provide an empirical test the effect of this risk and safety management techniques.

The festival safety was attempted secured by activities from the festival organisation in the form of risk analysis and related measures to reduce possible effects of adverse events. The risk analysis revealed a list of potential adverse events that to some extent could be counteracted by installing barriers that could be symbolic, organisational, functional and physical in nature and, especially in case of fire, combinations of the above were employed. Moreover, if adverse events occurred in spite of the barriers installed for their prevention, other barriers were introduced to reduce their possible consequences.

The risk management was integrated in the festival management, and the Director of the Gladmatfestival Board and the Gladmatfestival General Manager joined the daily safety meetings. Moreover, the festival risk management was organised in concert with the local authorities, that is, the police and the municipality including the fire brigade and the health authorities. There were also well functioning relationships to the municipality traffic control office, Alcohol Licence Inspection and State Food Inspection, all of which were integrated in a web-based handbook for festival organisers that also included all relevant forms, and that was issued by the municipality. The public units least well integrated in this cooperation were the Greater Stavanger Harbour Authorities, the Alcohol Licence Inspection and State Food Inspection. There seemed to be unclear interfaces between the festival organisation, the tent provider and the fire brigade, and one major safety obstacle appeared in this interface only six hours before a great dinner party should be arranged.

The risk management was at times crossing the border to service management, for instance when gangways were blocking public passages, or when tents that should shelter visitors against rain had to be taken down for safety reasons. These issues were found to range from instances where service management and safety management led to the same outcomes, to areas where risk management were counterproductive to service management.

As for the risk threatening instances observed, the functionality hypothesis (Tarlow, 2002) applied. Thus, one adverse event was likely to influence other factors and a chain of reactions could occur. Likewise, the conflict perspective (Tarlow, 2002) applied especially when one exhibitor tried to gain advantages (i.e. more space) on the cost of the common goods or the business of other exhibitors. The third perspective, the symbolic perspective, was not demonstrated, however, the publishing of the news about the State Food Inspectors closing outlets due to insufficient standards of the exhibitors was endangering the festival image in the eyes of the festival organisation. No data support that any damage was done to the festival or town image.

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CUSTOMER SATISFACTION WITH CULTURAL EVENTS: THE SOUTH TYROLEAN CHRISTMAS MARKETS

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Abstract

South Tyrolean Christmas markets originated from the German tradition and have had, from the beginning, a prevalent touristic purpose: to attract tourists during the pre-skiing holiday season. The Christmas markets have become one of the USP's in South Tyrol, being one of the most important events in the region. Due to their annual appearance, they have become a popular attraction and themselves a reason for spending the holidays in South Tyrol. The cooperation between the five participating cities, in terms of the communication and promotion of the events' network, is part of their success.

Analysis of customer satisfaction was undertaken by the European Academy of Bolzano-Bozen in five South Tyrolean cities where Christmas markets are held in regard to determining the level of tourists' appreciation of these events. The indicators selected for analysis were communication efficiency, organizational skills, satisfaction level and quality of services offered.

A high degree of quality is important for the successful presentation of the territory to its potential audience, and therefore a higher level of customer satisfaction leads to long-term success.

Keywords: Customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, cultural and traditional events, tourist attractions

Introduction

The competition between tourist destinations is based on diverse attraction points that are based on natural or artificial elements (Bieger, Wittmer 2006), as well as on cultural or sporting events. The latter are manifestations that are often organized to favour or increase the development of a given city also in touristic terms (Getz 2005, Häußermann, Siebel 1993). Both types of attraction points represent the distinguishing elements that determine the competitive nature of a specific destination in respect to others. In particular, cultural events are a subsection within the category of attraction points. They are an occasion through which visitors may further their personal knowledge of the city and/or the territory, as well a possibility for the actors of the tourist offering to prolong the tourist season.

Within the last few years, the proliferation of cultural events on the national and international territory has reached considerable dimensions. This is symptomatic for the increasing importance of the cultural sector and awareness of the fact that cultural events have a positive effect on the host territory, as they contribute to the social and economic growth of the local community (Getz 2008, Moscardo 2007). Moreover, from the managerial point of view, interaction between the stakeholders is interesting within the vision of development and promotion of a given tourist location in its entirety, as well as for local systems of offerings that are already at work inside the territory. The cultural events offer to individuals the possibility of enjoying culture outside the usual and habitually designated places and also by different means within the standard structures such as museums or concert halls. Therefore, we may observe increasing levels of success during recent years. In a large number of cases, the events present a strong link with the territory in which they take place, and vice versa, the territory gains a positive connotation that derives from the event itself.

The festival assumes a particular importance within the notion of "culture-driven" development (Tavano Blessi 2008) with the function of regenerating the territory and/or renewing the city: the role of events becomes increasingly that of smoothing any adversarial relation in the given field and thus creating the conditions for a "participatory" economy (Argano 2005).

In Italy, research on the impact of cultural festivals is very young and still rather vague, since within the editing of the impact analysis actual dates of quantitative and qualitative character are often missed, characters that are useful in determining the extra-economic aspects of the research (Guerzoni 2008: 24): not only the increased income of the managers and the concomitant services, but also the contribution of the event to the strengthening of the location's image on the outside, as well as internal cohesion, has to be measured (Getz Carlsen 2006).

Therefore, the following study underlines how customer satisfaction analysis represents an important methodology for monitoring the efficiency of an event. The attractiveness of the event, i.e. the enjoyment from the visitor, determines the degree of success and the sustainability of the event in the long term. Throughout the analysis of the client's satisfaction it is in fact possible to understand and manage in the most appropriate way the explicit and implicit necessities and desires of the user by operating if necessary at organizational level.

Cultural Events

A general definition of an event is given by Ritchie and Yangzou (1987: 23) as a "one-time or recurring event of limited duration, which serves to enhance the awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination in the short and/or long term. Such events rely for their success on their uniqueness, status or timely significance in order to create interest and attract attention."

The event is a happening that can be programmed in a more or less professional way and is of temporary character, although it can be repeated several times. It must moreover define itself as something unique and unrepeatable. The event is a moment in which communication takes place between diverse subjects that perceive it as a manifestation of something and/or someone through something: in past times this was associated with an extraordinary happening in order to celebrate events that were bound to the religious and social sphere of the community. Unlike then, today a festive event is no longer understood as an obligation but rather as an occasion to escape reality, thus the celebration has often been transformed into an occasion of transgression (Argano et al. 2005: 22 ff.).

To understand the peculiarity of the cultural events as an object of research to its full extent, it is important to explain the meaning of “culture”. There is not one single definition of culture, as the term is used in the most disparate ways following the context to which it refers. Within the available literature it is basically possible to distinguish two schools of thought: the first understands culture in a strict sense, defined by terms such as “fine arts” and “elite culture” that are meant to be enjoyed within institutions such as theatres, museums and libraries. A broader concept of culture became more widespread during the 1960s and refers to everyday traditions and customs: in this sense culture comprises values, language, morals, religion, and science, and the artistic experience becomes in turn a “form of escape, a diversion that serves the individual fantasy” (Spranzi 1994: 34).

The events (Ritchie 1984: 2) that refer to the major part of these fields are of interest for the society: in fact, there are organized events regarding the most disparate disciplines such as economics, science, politics or culture. Schneider researches which the features of events are. These are seen as a privileged place of meetings between diverse persons of similar interests and thus offer important possibilities for comparison. Referring to the project management, it is possible to underline a further distinction between events for the public audience or those limited solely to experts: the latter are in general characterized by large investment and high costs, to which corresponds a rather high contribution on the part of participants (Schneider 1992: 119 ff.).

Another characteristic to be emphasized is spatial and temporary concentration and the subject matter of the efforts of local politics within a single programme. The primary aim of the planning of events is to increase the city’s fame and direct monetary flows at the inside of the territory (Häußermann, Siebel 1993: 10). Getz (2005) subdivides events according to features regarding their dimensions and the audience which they address (cf. Goldblatt, Nelson 2001). The major part of festivals is concentrated in a precise location, often in a city, rather seldom extending to an entire territory.

In virtue of the increased leisure time at one’s disposal as well as the increased spending power of each single individual, together with a major mobility and frequency of the vacation periods, leads to a growing demand for cultural goods and services, therefore modifying the structure of consumer goods (Wünsch 2008). Thus, the increasing importance of cultural tourism and in particular of tourism bound to events is a testimony of market forces.

The cultural event is characterized as a *product* when there is a demand that contributes throughout one’s own experience as a user to define its specific characteristics (Bonel et al. 2005: 499). The market demand is in fact the result of a combination of consumer behaviour on the part of various users of the specific cultural manifestation: such events have to answer to precise and expected needs and necessities. The capacity of attraction of a cultural product is therefore defined on the basis of images and values that are transmitted through language and communication .

On one hand, organizations play an important role regarding the offer and the creation of a unified output; the perception of the user strongly influences the configuration of the end product, something which is moreover not modifiable by the company. On the other hand, the direct participation of the visitor at the pertinent proposal presupposes his personal evaluation of what is being transmitted. This procedure of co-production of the value of the cultural product does not allow the offering party to take overall control of the productive process. The companies that offer cultural products have to use a different mix of goods and services. The elements that are used within the cultural product are an output deriving from the typical activities of the companies, as well as the result of the activities of other companies that are bound to cultural goods, or connected respectively to the use of the cultural product itself (cf. Rispoli, Tamma 1996). To satisfy the market demand, the company can decide to create an extended product by including elements and factors of attraction that may even be far from their own typical activity.

The events themselves are a particular form of product since the reaction of the user/spectator to the stimuli and messages transmitted by the event is a fundamental component for the creation of cultural change (Jauss 1990; Iser 1989). The usage of cultural events realizes not only a consumer's activity, but culture is as a result contextually produced. The process of reception is therefore a constitutive part of the cultural event as such and determines its value and type of use. The strict interaction and almost sharing of the production of the events on the part of the consumers is a model that has applied for quite a while to the study of service production and has coined the terms *prosumer* (Toffler 1980), that is, the union of producer and consumer, and *servuction* (Eiglier, Langeard 1987), union of services and production.

Within the broader competition between tourist destinations, culture represents one of the major elements of the promotion of the different locations. The desire that pushes visitors towards the interest of culture and the cultural events of a determined locality in regard to where to spend their leisure time is the reason that leads to the listing of the event "South Tyrolean Original Christmas Market" among that type of tourist and cultural event. These need the active participation of the visitors regarding the evaluation. Tourist events are considered those temporary events with a particular set design and special interest either primarily or additionally for tourists (Freyer, Gross 2002).

Christmas and Advent Markets in Middle Europe

The tradition of the Christmas Markets has its origins in the German-speaking countries, beginning around the 14th century. At first these markets was dedicated to Saint Nicholas, and only after the Lutheran reforms were re-nominated as "Christkindlmarkt", the Market of the Infant Child (Moser 1993). The beginning of the winter season was the period during which merchants obtained permission to sell their merchandise before the oncoming period of austerity.

Over the years, the tradition of Christmas Markets changed and assumed more festive connotations until they became real festive occasions for the resident population and a motive of attraction for tourists (Weber-Kellerman 1978). The major part of these markets stay open only until to Christmas Eve, i.e. during the pre-skiing season.

On the contrary the Tyrolean tradition has different origins and therefore a different model of development. After the feast of Saint Martin in November, the agricultural season was about to be completed in the local farms and entire families gathered at home, especially around one living room, the so-called *stube*, without any other occupation apart from the spiritual preparation for the Advent season. These activities with which entire families were then occupied from mid-November on consisted in the preparation of songs, stories, prayers and decorations for the Christmas festivity. The exchange occasion took place when on Sundays after Holy Mass people gathered on the squares and the first proposals of commercial trading took place, also from the perspective of labour rationalisation. These encounters began to be interesting for learning the abilities of others and became in this way occasions for real commercial exchange. In Italy the Advent weeks have a much less rooted tradition than in the German speaking region: the only occasions to promote the Christmas trade were initially relegated to the last two Sundays before Christmas, i.e. the Silver and the Golden Sunday, on which the shops remained open as an incentive to final holiday purchases.

The Christmas Markets are now an attraction point for tourists and the motor of the location development, because they influence in economic terms the resources of the region, not only in terms of actual earnings, but also investments in human resources which bring important repercussions of a socio-cultural nature. The latter are favoured by the transmission of a positive image and by the satisfaction of the clients that have participated in the given manifestations. The pleasure by attending an event affects in fact on its sustainability and repeatability, if positive, and brings good socio-economical benefit to the location.

The Christmas Market is structured in a similar way in the German speaking region as in North and South-Tyrol, and generally appears as a series of market stands. Usually these are small wooden houses built alongside the principal urban axis and in the principal square in the city. The stands offer handcrafts and Christmas decorations and products of local tradition, as well as local gastronomic and culinary specialities, above all the local mulled wine. During the period of the Christmas Markets the various local administrations may offer parallel events in order to heighten the amusement and entertainment facilities for residents and tourists.

Christmas Markets in South Tyrol

The South Tyrolean Original Christmas Markets are part of the Germanic tradition and take place during the Advent period, in general from the end of November until Epiphany (January 6th). The first Christmas Market in Italy that was based on German tradition took place in Bolzano-Bozen and was realized, after a long term of planning, in 1991 by the will of the municipality, its tourist association and the local councillor then in office (Agosti 2008). The personalities who strongly wished to create these kind of Markets have nevertheless merely pursued the tourist interest since the beginning, without dedicating the same attention to the needs of the residents. It was the far-sightedness of the managing forces of the district politics of the other four big cities in South Tyrol (Merano-Meran, Bressanone-Brixen, Brunico-Bruneck and Vipiteno-Sterzing) that made certain that in following years a similar project could be organized also in those localities. However, it was the strong touristic vocation that has slowed down the acceptance on the part of the residents, even though the birth of such events can be easily reconnected to historical and cultural motivations and reasons. The Autonomous Province of Bolzano-Bozen has always had a strong tie to German culture and tradition and at the same time an important commercial touristic vocation, probably due also to its favourable geographic position. Therefore the culture of the Christmas Market could progressively affirm itself throughout the region. The perceived authenticity is one of the strengths of the events and, thanks to the collaboration between the five cities, it became over time also a strong instrument of promotion, able to present the image of South Tyrol to the potential visitors.

The image is the idea that the potential visitor gains of the locality that he wishes to visit and therefore contributes to the formation of the preferences and the expectations that are related to a determined territory. Consequently, the satisfaction of the expectation generate a positive or negative answer of the public that is related to the perceived quality (Ferrari, Adamo 2005).

In 2007 the Institute for Economic Research of Chamber of Commerce of Bolzano-Bozen interviewed a random sample of Italian tourists. The results describe a good image situation of South Tyrol, known by 77% of the interviewed, of whom 40% had already been in the Province of Bolzano-Bozen at least one time previously. The visitors appreciated the South Tyrolean region in a highly positive way and the images most associated with it were beautiful landscape, gastronomic specialities, tradition and culture, a pleasant climate, hospitality and activity offerings for leisure time. The Markets are predominantly known by those who had already visited South Tyrol (51%), but those who knew the region only from word-of-mouth were also well informed about the event (33%) (IRE-WIFO 2007).

Working together in the marketing as well as within the sale of original products, the five South Tyrolean cities have widely demonstrated that the markets have climbed with time to become a true attraction point for the South Tyrolean region and that they have successfully promoted the image of the region in Italy and abroad. More than ever, the cooperation among the cities demonstrated the importance of having a minimum of standard quality criteria to define the layout of the South Tyrolean Original Christmas Markets. This step was important in order to improve the commercialization of the event through tradition and authenticity. To win over jealousies and "parochialism" in order to promote in a unified way one's own specificity has permitted the event to obtain a product that is more easily saleable.

Following the big success among the public audience achieved by the development of the Christmas Markets in South Tyrol, also other Italian cities have decided to organize similar events, but the ones promoted by the Province of Bolzano-Bozen have a position that is rather traditional in orientation and - particularly in their early years - often refer prevalently towards the target of tourists. On the contrary, the German market is much more oriented to local tradition, although the markets that take place in big cities have a strong touristic vocation. In Italy the Christmas Markets have instead a low traditional orientation, mostly non-existent, and are principally addressed to the local population.

The "Original South Tyrolean Christmas Markets" fit also into a location of strong touristic vocation. The beginnings of this industry in South Tyrol date back to the mid-19th century following the emergence of some luxury hotels nearby the busy railway lines. In fact, already in the 19th century the Province of Bolzano-Bozen was considered by its Austrian rulers as the "balcony of the Monarchy", a good place to spend the holidays, to admire the landscape and to enjoy the healthy climate. After the re-configuration of the Italian border at the end of the First World War, the Province of Bolzano-Bozen became the most Northern destination of Italy, which meant undergoing remarkable modifications regarding the target of tourists, that meant new expectations and infrastructural necessities.

In the period between the two world wars South Tyrol experienced an improvement in touristic infrastructure. This provoked incremental growth in the total tourist movement (Rohrer 2003). However, it was only after the Second World War that this touristic development would be accepted by the local population. In this period rural areas became newly privileged destinations, of interest mainly for German-speaking guests. The owners of farms and commercial holdings in the mountains transformed their structures progressively into bed-and-breakfast places, guest houses and at the end into actual hotels. However, this development led to the unregulated exploitation of the protected mountain areas and were therefore rather quickly prohibited (Autonomous Province of Bolzano-Bozen, 1979).

Nowadays, South Tyrol features approximately 10,300 hotel structures and extra-hotel structures with approximately 22,000 accommodation units. The annual level of accommodation in 2007 registered approximately 5 million arrivals and almost 27 million persons present in the territory. However, the South Tyrolean hotel business, which underwent a real boom around the 1980s, suffered a strong drop because entrepreneurs who wish to retire from their touristic activity did not meet the interest of the young generation or due to prohibitive legislation and heavy financing risks.

Nowadays the total demand in South Tyrol is progressively increasing, expecially during the summer season. Meanwhile, the average duration has decreased. The major part of visitors are compound by German tourists, who constitute 47% of the total, and Italian guests (37%).

Within the last years the Autonomous Province of Bolzano-Bozen has made substantial investments in terms of tourist infrastructures and in regard to leisure time. The decision was undertaken to consolidate the already existing points of attraction and reach a good position within the national and the international market (Pechlaner, Kofink 2008). Among the attractions of this territory an important role is also played by cultural and sporting events. Thanks to their repeatability in terms of time and to progressive collaboration with the tourist infrastructure, the South Tyrolean Original Christmas Markets have become over the years a fundamental point of attraction for the locality, thus completing the touristic offer.

Impact of the South Tyrolean Christmas Markets

Emerging from recent research by the Institute for Economic Research of Chamber of Commerce of Bolzano-Bozen on the economic impact of the events, results show how these events have led to decisive benefits for the location, leading to a more equal seasonal distribution of the tourist flow, so as to better sustain local commercial activities. Up to 1990 the tourist management were usually closed for reconstruction work in the period between Saint Ambrose Day (December 8^{th}) and Christmas, and some hotels in the vicinities of the bigger ski resorts opened only on some days for the occasion of the Saint Ambrose weekend at the beginning of December. From the following year onward, the Christmas Markets had been added to the promotion *"Prima Neve"* [First Snow], thus combining visits to the ski resorts with participation in the event.

Among the strengths of these events there is on one hand their vicinity in the German culture, which leads to an authentic experience of Advent also in Italy, while on the other hand there is the possibility of acquiring local and authentic products (IRE-WIFO 2007).

The average spending of visitors results to 55 € pro capita, subdivided into 10 € for food, 20 € for gifts and 25 € for spending in shops (IRE-WIFO 2008). The latter shows how the event has doubtless provided benefit to the location as well, and is not limited to the market area. The South Tyrolean Christmas markets 2008 have been visited by together more than 400,000 people, with remarkable repercussions for the economy of the Province (cf. Tab. 1): the direct turnover amounted to over 24 million Euro, to which another 7 millions of indirect earnings must also be added, besides the intangible image effects (IRE-WIFO 2008).

Table 1 Economic Effects of the Five Christmas Markets

Visitors	401,500 persons
Accommodations	70,200 units
Turnover	31.7 million €
Surplus Value	8.8 million €

Employment Volume	105 work stations (with full-time jobs)
Tax revenues and Tariffs	2.3 million €

Source IRE-WIFO 2008

Customer Satisfaction

Brief theoretical background

The customer satisfaction analysis is an important instrument within the realization of the efficient promotion policy of the product. As the object of study, Christmas markets, is an annual event, a regularly conducted customer satisfaction analysis can create a significant additional value for product development and offering design. Monitoring changes on a long-term basis can help identify crucial issues and implement solutions and modifications to production. Or, as in the case of the "South Tyrolean Original Christmas Markets", to bring changes within the overall organization of the event.

Busacca (1994) affirms that today there are four reasons to predict as necessary the customer satisfaction analysis:

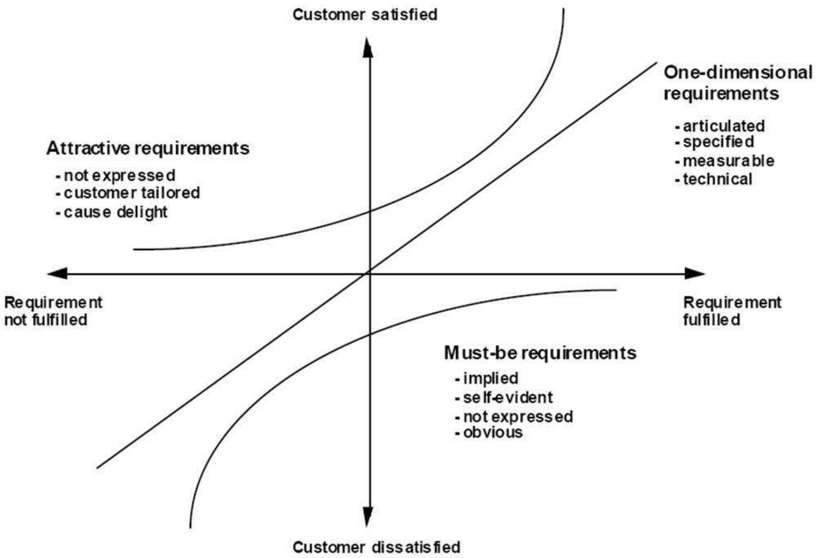
- The increase of competition imposes on the businesses a bigger "psychological" vicinity to the customer.
- The addition of immaterial elements that define the competitive advantage of a product/service.
- The technological development of products/services has an effect on the purchase process: the criteria of choice and purchase are not clear and explicit and have to be addressed through mechanisms of the creation of expectations that redefine the intangible components of the product/service tailored to the needs of the user.
- The demand is more and more conscious and informed and ought to research products/services of superior quality that permit the satisfaction of more and more needs.

Customer satisfaction is a type of multi-factored analysis (Gale 1994; Oliver 1997), since the factors that are considered by the visitors which offer a more or less positive opinion based on the event in which they took part are numerous. In order to get a complete view on the elements that define customer satisfaction, there has been created a reference to the scheme of Kano (1984) (Fig. 1), developed by Pechlaner and Matzler (2000); Sauerwein, Matzler and Pechlaner (2000); Matzler, Sauerwein and Stark (2000); Matzler and Pechlaner (2001); Matzler and Sauerwein (2002) that singles out three categories of subdivision of the preferences bound to the achieved service. These categories exert a different impact on customer satisfaction (Pechlaner et al. 2003):

- the *basic factors* represent the elementary characteristics that any products needs and that clients require as a prerequisite. The absence of such elements provokes a high dissatisfaction on the part of the user and, on the contrary, their presence is not a sufficient condition to satisfy the client. The customer acts on the assumption that these factors are given and therefore does not ask for them explicitly.
- the *performance factors* are at a superior level meant to be basic factors and improve the product as well as differentiate it on the market level. Clearly their absence jeopardizes satisfaction also in respect to the fact that performance elements are mostly pointed out by the client himself.

- the *excitement factors* are elements that the client does not expect to find and which can give high levels of satisfaction. In contrast to the previous elements, the lack of these factors does not necessarily lead to a negative opinion, insofar as they do not enter among the expressed expectations of the clients. If the previous elements are given and valued in a positive way by the customer, then they offer to the product a surplus value able to help differentiate and distinguish it on the market level.

Figure 1 Kano model



Source adapted from Kano 1984

The model proposed by Kano evolves continuously because the performance factors become basic elements and the same is true for the excitement factors as well. With time the customers assimilate the characteristics of the product and integrate them in their own expectations. The latter, therefore, always change and force the producer to renew constantly the scale of values that is transmitted by the product and the new market necessities.

Since it is not possible to determine for each product which are the elements that should be placed in these three categories, it is necessary to regularly conduct customer satisfaction analysis in order to understand how tastes evolve with time. The Kano model is useful for determining what are the product characteristics on which it is necessary to act in order to make sure that the customer satisfaction improves each time and therefore the customer loyalty is guaranteed (Disney 1999).

If the level of customer satisfaction is high, there is a guarantee of achieving not only economic, but also other future benefits. Although it is not difficult for cultural events to achieve new customers, on the contrary, eg. to the tourist destinations (Pechlaner, Matzler 2000) it is notoriously more expensive to attempt to gain new customers in a regular way, or a new market segment instead of increasing the already existing level of customer satisfaction.

The consequences deriving by a good customer satisfaction are the principal motivations for which such analysis should be conducted constantly. In case of the customer satisfaction of services, such as cultural events, it is necessary to consider emotional aspects: the event is perceived as a unity of its own, now and then, and therefore the possibilities of a failure increase according to the decrease in the frequency of the event's repetition.

Customer satisfaction with events

The scientific research on the theme of customer satisfaction develops within the last twenty years of the last century and comprises numerous alternative models of measuring satisfaction (Erevelles, Leavitt 1992). The model that has achieved, among all proposed, the highest empirical replay, was the expectation-disconfirmation model (Oliver 1980). It is based on the confrontation between the perception of the commodity or the service, and the previous expectations of the client regarding the commodity or the service itself (Sauerwein 2000). When the expectations are inferior towards the achieved, the degree of pleasure regarding the commodity or the service is high, when on the contrary the expectations of the clients differ from what he actually achieves, there is a high level of dissatisfaction. If the quality of the commodity or service corresponds to the expectations, there will be a complex result of indifference or moderate satisfaction (Helson 1964).

For the customer satisfaction analysis of the South Tyrolean Original Christmas Markets different methodologies have been applied. The importance and performance analysis provides the representation of satisfaction with single factors and their importance for the customer. Within the axis, the standard values of the relevant attributes are inserted: a small surface of the area - formed by the diverse evaluations - means a low overall satisfaction and a big surface a high overall satisfaction. The second method is the importance grid which combines the explicit importance expressed by the client, i.e. the importance that the client attributes to each factor, and the implicit importance, calculated by a correlation or regression analysis. The result is a matrix of four quadrants that shows the elements that need to be developed or improved, as well as the importance of these elements from the visitor's point of view (Matzler 2002; Matzler et al. 2001; Vavra 1997). In addition, the linear regression is a statistical method that characterizes the value of the dependent variable (satisfaction), given the values of other independent variables that influence it. It measures the dependence grade among the variables. The result is a regression coefficient that indicates the relative importance of the customer satisfaction in relation to the independent variables (Brandt 1988; Brandt, Reffet 1989; Oliver 1997).

Various reasons lead to the consideration of satisfaction as an important element for marketing purposes and guarantee the success of an event. The customer satisfaction evaluation reflects how precise expectation are satisfied and can be reached after the achievement of a product or the participation at an event (Oliver 1981). The theory of customer satisfaction serves to define the most important elements - from the visitor's point of view - that attract potential guests to join a particular event. The below presented study explains which images of the South Tyrolean cities are transmitted through the degree of satisfaction of the visitors. These positive factors contribute to the increase of the success of the event in the long term.

Pine and Gilmore (1999) define the experience economy as a phase of development of industrial economy and service economy". The experiences represent the most evolved form of generating value through the management of economic activities as a form of spectacle able to emotionally involve the client". The idea (Pine, Gilmore 2002) is that to satisfy the needs of the clients and to differentiate oneself from the competition the business should offer products of a higher economic and experiential value. In touristic terms, the experiential value of a product or service is therefore a dominant factor in influencing the traveller's decision towards a determined destination (Knutson, Beck 2003).

Rifkin (2000) and Schafer (2008) identify two fundamental principles of the contemporary age within culture and experience, therefore all commercial sectors are, within the vision of the new experiential economy, interested in the evaluation of the user's experiences through the achievement of commodities and services (Schafer 2008: 8). The events are the new products of the experience industry: their uniqueness transforms the use into something that is not to be missed and therefore raises the experience up to the level of becoming a primary motivation of the visitors of contemporary manifestations. In response to the necessity of satisfying a demand of new necessities of experiential type, the way of conceiving the final product changes. The output that results from the new process deriving from the "experience industry" is an amalgamation between factors of attraction, i.e. commodities and services of the hosting locality and of the cultural products that are offered and the characteristics of the user that demands more and more culture, experience and knowledge (Keller 2006: 67).

It is well known how the quality of the offer and the customer satisfaction represent a fundamental component of a destination's competitiveness (Pechlaner et al. 2002; Pechlaner, Weiermair 2000). Thus, departing from this assumption, an advice of the authors of the customer satisfaction of an event can be inserted in the more ample program of destination management. The cultural tourism and event tourism is a sector that continuously improves (Steinecke 2007) and the tourism as well as the culture play a fundamental role within the formation of the destination image on the part of the visitor (Morgan, Pritchard 1998): they are also the instruments that are used to answer the client's expectations. The improvement of cultural consumption became fundamental within the current society and leads also to economical benefits (Zukin 1995). For example, an image of a locality is not only formed by the physical presence of the cultural heritage, but also based on a series of experiences that the visitor can collect during his stay (Richards, Wilson 2006). The events provide the client with a further motivation of visiting and can define important factors of localization within the growing competition among touristic destinations (Dziembowska-Kowalska, Funck 2000).

The literature has widely demonstrated how an event can influence in a significant way the image of a destination (Ferrari, Adamo 2005) and therefore also the satisfaction of the visitors in terms of a optimal management of cultural events. Thus, consequently the customer satisfaction of an event is directly co-related to the positive estimation of the touristic destination and its positioning in the market (Wilson 2002, Sivadas, Baker-Previtt 2000). Since the touristic destination is intended as a together of commodities and services, among them also cultural events, the evaluation of satisfaction of the latter cannot leave out of consideration the degree of positive or less positive valuation of the destination in terms of its entirety (Pechlaner et al. 2002). However, such events can be numbered among those elements that constitute the attractiveness of the destination and thus favour its success, if valued in a positive way by visitors according the scheme of Zeithalm (2000), that identifies a direct correlation between the services on offer, customer satisfaction and the success of the destination as a product.

Empirical Analysis

Research Question and Methodology

The study conducted by the Institute for Regional Development and Location Management of the European Academy of Bolzano-Bozen regards the level of satisfaction of visitors to the South Tyrolean Original Christmas Markets during the holiday season 2004-2005 (Pechlaner et al. 2005). The study was commissioned by five South Tyrolean cities and the South Tyrol Marketing Society.

The research emerges as a basis for future improvement within product development by emphasizing the strengths and weaknesses of already realized initiatives. The inquiry was concerned with visitors to the Christmas Markets in all five South Tyrolean cities and was prepared in collaboration with the South Tyrolean Tourism Marketing Company. To carry out this enquiry, Italian visitors, which represent the most important target group of the Christmas Markets, have been interviewed with a structured questionnaire which was composed of 11 questions with closed answers and one question with an open answer.

The aim was to better understand which elements of the market correspond to the expectations of the visitors and which the most influential elements in regard to the overall satisfaction of the visit are. The research questions deals with the motivations and expectations of the visitors, the relative strengths and weaknesses as they are perceived by the clients and the unique selling propositions of the Christmas Market, the efficiency of the event's communication, the satisfaction with the parallel events that have been organized as well as the presence on the Internet and promotion of the itinerary of the five Christmas Markets located in the South Tyrolean cities.

Data has been collected through direct interviews and 1,031 questionnaires have been considered as valid. The interviews took place during Advent, i.e. from November 27th, 2004 to January 6th, 2005 with the exception of Bolzano-Bozen, where the Christmas Market closed on December 23rd, 2004. On average around 25 interviews per day were conducted during weekends, and about 17 during public holidays. Regarding the Advent Markets of Bolzano-Bozen, Bressanone-Brixen and Merano-Meran five days during weekends and three days during the week were needed, while in Brunico-Bruneck and Vipiteno-Sterzing the survey was conducted on six weekend days and four public holidays.

A random sample has been used for the interviews. To be precise, the interviewers were positioned in an area of the Christmas Market with a good flow of visitors, and interviewed guests who had declared themselves at the disposal and were willing to subject themselves to an enquiry, at a rate of approx. every 15 minutes. As "tourists" were considered all Italian guests deriving from regions outside the Autonomous Province of Bolzano-Bozen. The evaluation scale presented to the interviewed persons varied from 1 to 5, 1 being the lowest value and 5 the highest: 1 = not at all satisfied, 2 = barely satisfied, 3 = average level of satisfaction, 4 = fairly satisfied and 5 = very satisfied. The importance scale in the same way is 1= null, 2 = low, 3 = medium, 4 = good and 5 = high.

The study of the satisfaction of the organizational aspects of the South Tyrolean Christmas Markets has been prepared on the basis of an enquiry conducted the year before, in which it had been demonstrated how the Christmas Market was not the only one interest of the visitors. Being conscious of the importance of the role of the event within the spectrum of the tourist offerings and image of South Tyrol, it was therefore investigated further and more concretely in terms of the actual necessities of overall demand. The questionnaire was therefore subdivided in three sections: the organisation of the event, the attractiveness of the hosting city and the Christmas Market as a point of interest unto itself.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The first part of the questionnaire investigated the degree of satisfaction around the organizational aspects of the Advent Market; to be precise, the communication of the event and the logistic aspects of the visitor's reception. The evaluation that was achieved regarding the utility of the received information was good (Tab. 2), and averaged around a score of 3.68. In decreasing order Internet, press and travel agencies reached the highest levels (between 3.76 and 3.68). Tourist information office scored a low evaluation, 3.54, followed only by television.

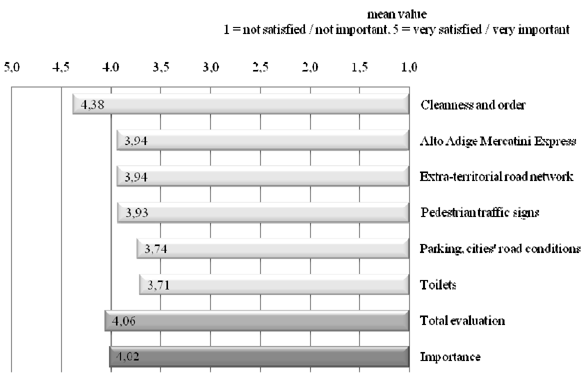
Table 2 Evaluation on received information

	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Satisfaction
Internet	68	116	429	3.76
Magazines and Press	71	151	381	3.70
Travel Agencies	67	100	312	3.69
Brochures	69	142	406	3.68
Tourist Information Office	66	124	265	3.54
Television	148	126	196	3.10
Overall evaluation on received information				3.86

Source European Academy Bolzano-Bozen 2004

The organization (Fig. 2) proved to be excellent regarding cleanness and order (4.38) and very good in terms of managing the extra-territorial road network and pedestrian traffic signs (3.93). The overall evaluation value of 4.06 was very positive and the importance equal to 4.02. The introduction for the Advent season of 2004 of the Christmas Market Alto Adige Express Service from Verona - Bolzano-Bozen – Bressanone-Brixen – Vipiteno-Sterzing with access to Merano-Meran and Brunico-Bruneck reached a favourable opinion on the part of the interviewed persons, even if the novelty, the delimitation of the service on Sunday and the lateness of communication permitted it to reach only a reduced numbers of visitors.

Figure 2 Satisfaction with the event's organization



Source European Academy Bolzano-Bozen 2004

The organization of the event was a fundamental factor that had an influence on the visitors as well as on the tourist operators of the host cities. Considering the basic factors of high quality tourist service, an overall evaluation for the South Tyrolean Christmas Markets of 4.06 could be reached. All of the cities achieved positive comments (Tab. 3), by the pointing out of the importance of the organizational factor as a typical and characteristic element of South Tyrolean hospitality. From the sub-division of the evaluation of the localities, the result was that the best organization was found in Merano-Meran (4.20), the worst in Vipiteno-Sterzing (3.84).

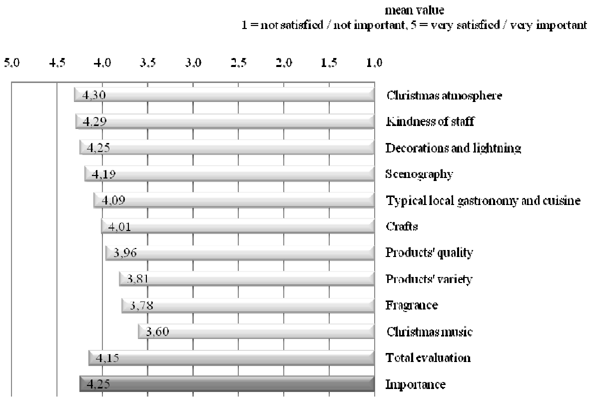
Table 3 Organizational efficiency of the Advent Markets

	Extraterritorial road network	Parking lots/ urban road network	Pedestrian traffic sign	Toilets	Cleanliness/ order	Overall Evaluation
Bolzano-Bozen	3,83	3,76	4,00	3,48	4,38	4,02
Bressanone-Brixen	3,85	3,85	3,95	3,60	4,49	4,10
Brunico-Bruneck	3,94	4,13	3,92	3,64	4,39	4,16
Merano-Meran	4,06	3,99	4,14	3,77	4,50	4,20
Vipiteno-Sterzing	3,99	3,10	3,67	3,94	4,16	3,84

Source European Academy Bolzano-Bozen 2004

The largest part of the questions was concentrated on the satisfaction of the Christmas Market of the cities that hosted the events and also of the destination of South Tyrol in its entirety. From the analysis of the single factors that characterize the Advent Market (Fig. 3) there emerged a high satisfaction for the Christmas atmosphere (42% of the visitors were satisfied and 46% very satisfied) and a good one for the scenography (51% satisfied and 35% very satisfied). The Market represented the centre of attraction of the Christmas event and the positive evaluation of the event was principally based on the following factors (r^2 = 0.428: explains approx. 43% of the variation): the Christmas atmosphere, the presence of local craft work, the typical local gastronomy and cuisine and the Christmas music.

Figure 3 Satisfaction with the Christmas market features



Source European Academy Bolzano-Bozen 2004

The elements that constituted the Christmas Market were considered very important within the evaluation of the visitors (importance 4.25) and the principal characteristics liked by the visitors were the Christmas atmosphere, the courtesy of the personnel and the decorations of the area in which the event took place. Critical points were the quality and variety of the products, the scents and the Christmas music. The quality and the variety of the offered products are relevant aspects because they offer the possibility to acquire products of local origin. The average satisfaction for the quality level was 3.96 and for variety 3.81. Some of those interviewed considered the introduction of imported products as a diminishing factor regarding the originality of the event. However, these elements affected in a reduced way the overall evaluation of 4.15. The courtesy of the personnel was considered as very high, with a rating of 4.29.

By delving deeper into further analysis by subdividing the elements in regard to the individual Christmas Markets (Tab. 4), there emerges a relatively homogeneous situation for the specific elements. At an overall level, the Christmas Markets achieved a judgement that fell between 4.09 and 4.21.

Table 4 Satisfaction with the Christmas market by features, sub-divided by city

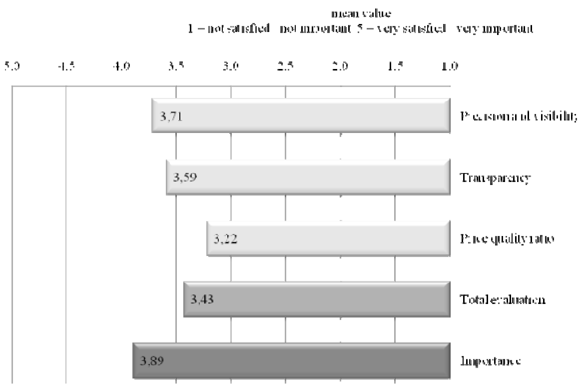
	scenography	atmosphere	decorations/ lights	music	product quality	product variety	handicraft	wine- gastronomy	scents	courtesy	overall evaluation
Bolzano-Bozen	4.25	4.36	4.40	3.76	3.98	3.84	4.12	4.18	3.71	4.20	4.19
Bressanone-Brixen	4.15	4.22	4.17	3.59	3.99	3.92	4.01	4.14	3.78	4.27	4.21
Brunico-Bruneck	4.04	4.22	4.06	3.58	3.95	3.63	4.18	4.15	3.76	4.21	4.15
Merano-	3.96	4.08	4.04	3.28	3.90	3.66	3.84	4.08	3.82	4.23	4.10

Meran											
Vipiteno-Sterzing	4.50	4.62	4.56	3.73	4.00	3.97	3.91	3.91	3.83	4.52	4.09

Source European Academy Bolzano-Bozen 2004

A further feature of relevant importance within the task of determining the overall satisfaction of the event among visitors was - in the case of the Christmas Markets that offered the possibility of buying products - the relative satisfaction regarding prices (Fig. 4). The interviewed persons were on average satisfied by the costs of the products sold at the Markets (3.43). Satisfaction was generated above all in regard to the transparency and visibility of the prices, while the evaluation regarding the price/quality ratio was low. This result depended also on the fact that the sensibility of the interviewed persons towards the prices was average 3.89. Although there was an element of complaint regarding high prices (3.43), an opposite value affirmed a high appreciation for artisanal quality (4.08) and gastronomy (4.01). The visitors complained about the repetition of the product range throughout the years and inside the Christmas Market’s itinerary, apart from the high costs of artisanal products.

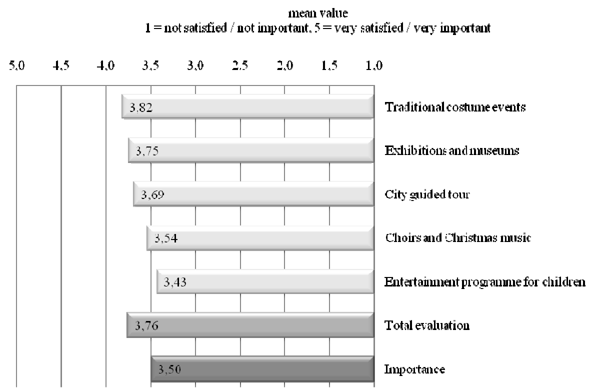
Figure 4 Satisfaction with prices



Source European Academy Bolzano-Bozen 2004

Besides attending the Christmas Markets a series of parallel events have been organized to complete the entertainment programme for the visitors (Fig. 5). Even though the variety of the offering of events where to partake represents an enrichment and a further motivation for the guests to visit the place, regrettably only a few visitors (14%) could give an evaluation of the programme, due to the fact that they had not taken part or had not known that it was going on. Among those who could answer this question, the satisfaction was basically positive (3.76). The most appreciated activities of the programme were the traditional costume events (3.82), visits to exhibitions and museums (3.75) and the overall visit to the city (3.69). In contrast, the results concerning the entertainment programme for children were particularly low in regard to South Tyrolean standards.

Figure 5 Satisfaction with the animation programme

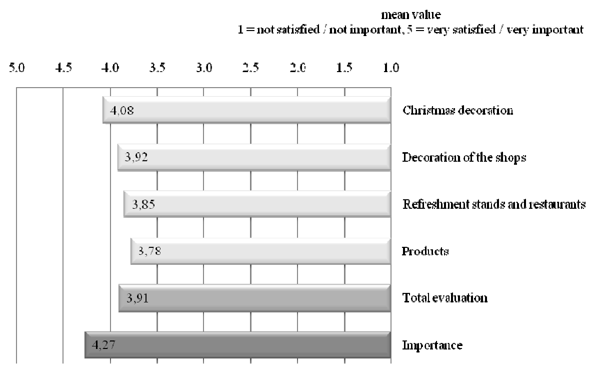


Source European Academy Bolzano-Bozen 2004

The second part of the analysis of customer satisfaction aimed at comprising the role of the city and the visitors' evaluation about their visit outside of the event reserved area.

The Christmas atmosphere of the city was considered as a highly relevant factor (4.27) by the visitors and the overall evaluation of the tourists (3.91) reveals general satisfaction with the Christmas decoration, as well as for the decoration of the shops and refreshment stands and restaurants (Fig. 6). Even if the cities contend with each other for satisfaction values between the different factors, among the localities that hosted the events the average evaluation fell at 3.85. The city's atmosphere was valued best in Bressanone-Brixen (3.94) and least in Merano-Meran (3.85).

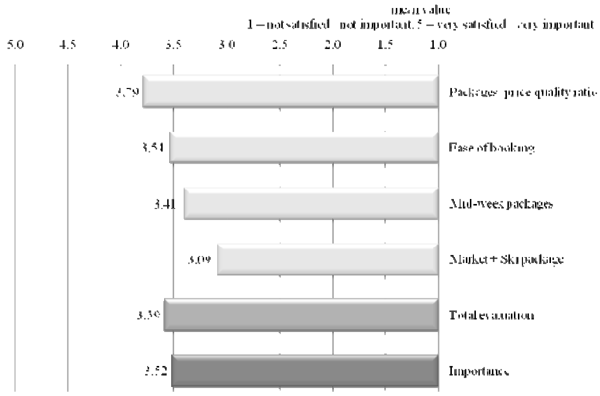
Figure 6 Satisfaction with the city's atmosphere



Source European Academy Bolzano-Bozen 2004

If at first the visit to the Christmas Markets emerged as a one-day excursion or at most a weekend activity, within recent years an increased development of activities has taken place, with the aim of achieving a longer stay for visitors to South Tyrol (Fig. 7). One of these strategies was the creation of a touristic mid-week package that connected the visit to the Christmas Markets with the pre-opening of the skiing season, which was known by 22% of the interviewed persons and valued by them in a fairly positive way (3.59). 20% of the interviewed persons knew about overnight accommodation packages and 6% made use of them, giving these a positive evaluation (3.59).

Figure 7 Satisfaction with accommodation packages offered for the Advent period



Source European Academy Bolzano-Bozen 2004

The accommodation packages motivated visitors to stay longer in South Tyrol, and helped to distribute the tourist flow towards midweek, with the aim of diminishing accumulation on the weekends and especially the Saint Ambrose weekend. The overall evaluation regarding the package offering was satisfying on average (3.59). The average importance (3.52) of this factor for the interviewed persons was remarkable.

The last part of the questionnaire sought to investigate the satisfaction of the visitors regarding their visit to the tourist destination of South Tyrol. The resultant data showed that the event “Original South Tyrolean Christmas Markets”, due to its high satisfaction factor, can be regarded as an efficient instrument of promotion for the region (Tab. 5).

The satisfaction with the visit to the Christmas Markets (4.22) and the cities which were the setting for these events (4.25) was high, and from this derived a high degree of satisfaction also for the overall stay in South Tyrol (4.21). The most satisfying aspects for the South Tyrolean region as well as for the single cities were landscape, tradition, hospitality and Christmas atmosphere.

Table 5 Overall Satisfaction with the Christmas markets

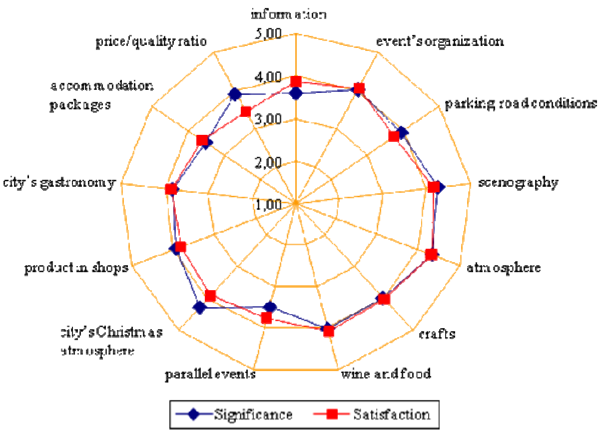
	South Tyrol	City	Christmas Market	Overall Evaluation
Bolzano-Bozen	4.16	4.20	4.22	4.24
Bressanone-Brixen	4.33	4.33	4.22	4.28
Brunico-Bruneck	4.37	4.35	4.22	4.28
Merano-Meran	4.21	4.22	4.13	4.19
Vipiteno-Sterzing	3.97	4.14	4.29	4.10

Source European Academy Bolzano-Bozen 2004

Importance and Performance Analysis

The second part of the questionnaire provided a series of questions based on specific elements that were considered important for the recognition of satisfaction in respect to the Christmas Markets themselves. The interviewed persons were asked to indicate their own satisfaction and the importance for each factor, as well as give an overall evaluation regarding grouped factors. In the same way, they were also asked to express the importance of the factors regarding the competition of creating an overall sense of satisfaction in regard to the Christmas Markets. The request to indicate the importance led to the following results: the primary attraction is played by the atmosphere of the Christmas Markets and the cities, followed by the scenography and the culinary and gastronomic offers, and further by the importance attributed to the organizational capacities.

Figure 8 Importance and performance graphic



Source European Academy Bolzano-Bozen 2004

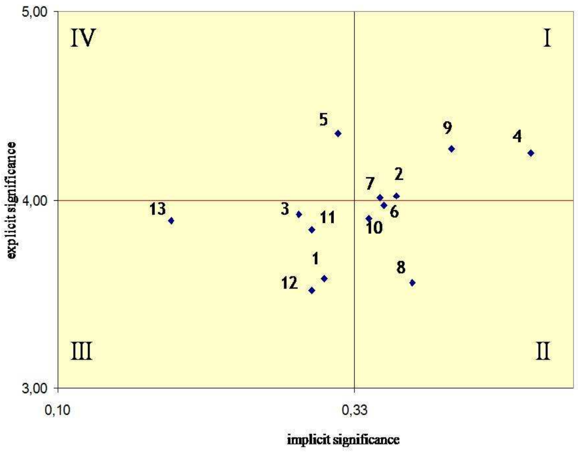
The importance and performance analysis (Fig. 8) allows one to compare the satisfaction level reached by the visitors and the evaluation of importance of the factors considered for their satisfaction. The graphic representation makes visible the critical points where to intervene, i.e. the point where the importance attributed to the element to evaluation is higher in regard of the level of satisfaction than for the factor itself. It is also possible to regard the points that require action in terms of improvement and the most significant factors for the consumers.

The implicit importance results which were superior to explicit satisfaction fell within quality/price ratio, the city's atmosphere and parking/road conditions. The level of satisfaction was more important than the necessity to acquire information or to have an animation programme and accommodation packages. Thus, these elements have a secondary importance within the generating of satisfaction.

Importance Grid

To go further into the analysis of the relationship between importance and explicit satisfaction with implicit importance, the following importance grid matrix was used (Fig. 9). This methodology is based on the classification of the three factors of Kano and visualize which are the non-important factors of satisfaction (III), important (I), basic elements (IV) and enthusiasm factors (II) (Vavra 1997: 385).

Figure 9 Satisfaction analysis by implicit and explicit importance



Key

1 Received information

2 Organization of the event

3 Parking and road conditions

4 Scenography and Markets' Christmas decorations

5 Christmas atmosphere of Markets

6 Christmas Markets crafts and products

7 Wine and gastronomic offer at Christmas Markets

8 Advent Market animation programme

9 Christmas atmosphere in the city

10 Local products in the shops of the city

11 Range of refreshment offerings in the city

12 Accommodation packages for the Advent weeks

13 Price/quality Ratio

Source European Academy Bolzano-Bozen 2004

The graphic shows how the Christmas atmosphere of the Markets was considered an essential basic factor, while the factors of excitement were the artisanal products of the Markets, the their animation program and the local products on offer within the shops of the city. The performance elements were the wine and gastronomic offerings at the Markets, the organization level of the event, the scenography of the Markets and the Christmas atmosphere of the city.

Moreover, through the analysis of linear regression in order to understand the factors that mostly influence the overall satisfaction for the event, the results that the factors that most influence the overall evaluation of the visitor ($r^2 = 0.625$, explains more than 62% of the variant) were logistic and organizational aspects such as parking lots, road networks and event organization, apart from the basic elements that make this experience the most authentic, such as the wine and gastronomic offering of local products, or the scenography and Christmas decoration of the Markets (Tallinucci, Pechlaner 2009).

Conclusion

The study shows that the Christmas Markets in South Tyrol are a successfull product and there has been an improving sense of affirmation and acceptance by tourists, as the first target grou, but also by local residents, who consider the event a further possibility of amusement and diversion. However, from the first editions there emerged the necessity of reconciling the requirements of the different stakeholders. Analysis of customer satisfaction shows which are the strengths and weaknesses of the event, therefore leading to improvements which enhance its overall value. Through the definition of customer satisfaction it is possible to determine all of those organizational and economic aspects that lead to the event becoming the most possibly sustainable and attractive over time.

A spectrum of instruments was offered, in order to monitor the level of customer satisfaction, indicative of the importance of this aspect for the management of the event. By measuring the liking of visitors for the aspects of the event, it is possible to provide suggestions to the management and define where to address potential investments and also to verify the social-economical sustainability of the actions that need to be undertaken. Through the identification of the principal factors that determine the overall satisfaction of the event, it is possible to locate the most appropriate and concerted strategies in order to improve the relevant resulting points and to achieve high valuation by the clients. It is also possible to define the importance of certain factors in respect to others and, in consequence, to determine with more facility on which elements to focus.

The original South Tyrolean Christmas Markets are a characteristic event of this host location: the landscape, culture and tradition of local craft products and wine-gastronomic facilities provide the image of the event that is perceived outside the region. It turns the Christmas Markets into a singular happening within the touristic panorama. For the South Tyrolean tourist economy, the emergence of the Christmas Markets has helped to distribute the tourist flow towards a specific period which is usually a low season for these five cities.

The success of the event in the Italian market has moreover raised the tourist image of the location itself, sustaining the culture as a motive of attraction, the city as an original setting and the local product as a generating object of value. The development and success of the Christmas Markets have been made possible precisely through the continuous monitoring of visitors' replies and suggestions. It must be therefore the object of the organizers of these events to create a permanent system of evaluation of organizational aspects in order to best manage in an optimal way the development of the event over the coming years. The theory according to which an event is able to increase the attractiveness of a destination by transmitting a positive image of the location in which it takes place, demonstrates how customer satisfaction plays a fundamental role within the promotion of a tourist destination.

One research limit is that this study was conducted in 2004 and further customer satisfaction research about the South Tyrolean Original Christmas Markets should be done to verify the modifications that have been implemented over the years. Another lack of the analysis is that the questionnaires were only for Italian tourists. Although they are a very important touristic target group in South Tyrol, the most important one is the German group since German tourists represent 47% of all arrivals in the region (ASTAT 2008). The expectations of the different target groups can vary quite a lot and therefore lead to remarkably different results.

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EVENTS, TOURISM, AND SUSTAINABILITY – A CLASSIFICATION AND RESEARCH PROPOSAL

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Abstract

Do special events constitute an industry? This article applies earlier approaches to identifying an industry, as expounded by Leiper (2008) to classify the tourism sector, to develop an understanding of whether special events can be understood as an industry or otherwise. It is proposed that special events be conceptualized through application of cluster theory, and more specifically as asymmetrical clusters.

A potential measure of the strength of the cluster, i.e. the economic and ecological competitiveness and sustainability of special events within a destination, is offered through use of Porter's diamond of competitiveness.

Finally, this paper outlines a research proposal to assess conditions that may be associated with positive ecological outcomes of special events that are hypothesized as focal firm values, alliance partner configuration, and the unique environmental conditions. Therein, hypotheses are generated and a methodology, that applies survey data and ecological footprint analysis offered to test the same.

Keywords: Events, Sustainable Development, Ecological Sustainability, Tourism

Introduction

Places are increasingly targeting the hearts and minds of people. From their arsenal of *ploys* to attract and retain creative people, profitable business, and tourism market share, cities and regions employ festivals, conventions, and other special events of various *forms* (cultural, political, entertainment (including sports), business, educational, etc) as a place marketing strategy and economic development and civic boosterism policy.

Festivals, conventions and other special events are a rather unique form of tourism "product," sometimes produced directly by Destination Marketing/Management Organizations (DMOs), and often bid on within a competitive marketplace. Some events, especially festivals, are much more difficult for a DMO to coordinate or effectively market. Nevertheless, many destinations are positioned as festival or event cities, and event tourism strategies are becoming increasingly sophisticated in order to compete globally.

Events also generate numerous negative impacts, especially upon the environment (ecology). Given the current global discourse surrounding sustainable development, a few interesting questions emerge. Are events sustainable? What kinds of events are ecologically sustainable? What factors lead to ecologically sustainable events? What role do event organizers play in making the event ecologically sustainable? How do partnerships affect the ecological sustainability of an event?

In this context, this paper seeks to answer three key questions:

In what sense do events constitute an industry?

Can the strength, i.e. sustainable competitive advantage, of the events “industry” within a destination be measured?

What are the drivers of ecological sustainability of events?

This paper is organized as follows. First is a discussion on special events and if they can be described as an industry. This is followed by an assessment of if the strength of the events ‘industry’ can be measured. A brief expose of cluster theory is then offered, followed by a discussion on sustainability strategies and clusters. Finally, this research proposal focuses on sustainability within event clusters and develops a conceptual model and subsequent hypotheses.

Special Events

Events subsume a wide range of occurrences, from hurricanes to the Olympics, historic presidential elections to music awards. Therefore, we should first delineate the boundaries for the specific type of events being addressed here. Getz (2008, p. 21) separates planned events from unplanned ones and identifies the former as:

“created to achieve specific *outcomes*, including those related to the economy, culture, society and environment. Event planning involves the *design and implementation* of themes, settings, consumables, services, and programmes that suggest, facilitate or constrain experiences for participants, guests, spectators, and other stakeholders. Every event *experience* is personal and unique, arising from the interaction of setting, program and people” (emphasis added)

The quote above alludes to the three key components of planned events (here forth referred to as events), function (i.e. outcome), form (i.e. design and implementation), and how they combine to create experiences.

Events are organized by a focal entity that comprises the functions of event promoter and event organizer. In some cases, these activities are housed under the same organization, and in other cases the event executor becomes the relationship between two independent virtual organizations performing these activities (Erickson and Kushner, 1999). The event promoter function entails the management of a newly created or pre-existing event and its enactment across a single (e.g. Calgary Stampede & Exhibition – CS&E) or multiple destinations (e.g. International Olympic Committee, Fédération Internationale de Football Association, National Football League, etc). The event organizer function originates from private, public, and/or not for profit organizations at a destination, and entails the competitive bidding and facilitation of the event at the destination or a location (e.g. city/state in the case of Olympics, convention centers in the case of exhibitions and fairs, stampede grounds in the case of CS&E, etc). Private sector organizers are usually interested in purely economic outcomes while the public and not for profit sector organizers incorporate social outcomes (i.e. economic development and civic boosterism) as well (sometimes only social outcomes are sought, in which case they are prepared to incur a loss).

Do Events Constitute an Industry?

Events, by nature, are temporally bound and involve a multitude of stakeholders. From an economic standpoint, the key relationships of the event organizer with suppliers, vendors, sponsors, media, and providers of other outsourced functions to an event, is a network that spans multiple industries. As well, new alliances are formed with the pre-existing networks of the event promoters that impact the event (Erickson and Kushner, 1999). Could we then say that events are an industry onto themselves?

Getz (2000, p. 15) comments, “to the extent that events generate a great deal of economic impact, both income and employment, they might be called an industry.” However, he also observes that this debate already exists in the tourism field, and that the quest to be labeled an industry arises to garner support and resource commitments from political and business circles. In tourism literature, Leiper (2008) identifies seven approaches from within and outside tourism studies applied to identify an industry. We test events against these approaches to establish if they constitute an industry

Authoritarian decree: This approach argues for the structuring of industries based on standardized industrial classification codes. Classification schemas have been both a boon (in organizing diversity) and bane (in their failure to incorporate dynamism therein). Economic classification speaks of sectors and industries. Clark (1950) identifies the four key industrial economic sectors as primary (extraction based), secondary (manufacturing based), tertiary (services based) and quaternary (knowledge based). Events straddle the latter two of these sectors. On the other hand, industry classification at the international level is a process that began in 1948 by the United Nations, and has seen its most recent update in August 2008 with the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC Ver. 4). Similar codes exist regionally for North America (NAICS), United Kingdom (UK ICS), European Union (NACE), Australia (ANZSIC), etc. Although there remains some debate on appropriate industry boundaries, especially emanating from management science literature, availability of data and consistency of measures has driven the application of standardized classification codes. The ensuing categorization of industries has been widely applied as the unit of analysis in management research, especially in IO economics. Events, however, are not classified as an industry according to this system.

Impact on economies: This approach argues for the structuring of industries based on expenditures towards its products. The most widely applied method of economic impact assessment in events alludes to direct impacts (production changes due to increased spending), indirect impacts (production changes due to increased circulation of funds), and induced impacts (changes in spending due to increased household income – calculated as a sales, output, income, or employment multiplier) (Nica and Swaidan, 2004). However, this is an approximate demand-based measure at best, and does not truly identify an industry. A supply-based approach may allow for a measurement of the economic impact of an event(s), but is difficult to capture. However, depending upon how narrow or broad the scope of such impact is conceptualized as (only upon primary and secondary suppliers, or otherwise as well), measurement may be possible through primary data only. In other words, a discernable industry does not emerge through this approach.

Competition: This approach defines industries on the basis of firms competing with each other and is rooted in the work of Porter (1980). Event organizers may be said to compete with each other, if the event is of the same form (e.g. cultural, sports, etc). However, events serve various purposes and therefore the event organizers cannot be understood as in competition with each other. The various firms that partner with an event too compete with each other, though only within their particular product or service category. For example, food vendors compete with each other, not with merchandisers. As well, competition is mostly local within the event network, and not with partners of events in other destinations. On the other hand destinations compete with each other in a bidding process to host many large scale events. Pursuing this alternate line of reasoning, large-scale events with formal bidding processes may constitute an industry based on the competition approach. However, events range in scale from the mega (Olympics) geared for national and international exposure, to the diminutive (local wine tasting) targeting local visitors only. As such, based on the competition approach, there is ambiguity surrounding the status of events as an industry due to inherent heterogeneity of the events themselves.

Substitutable facilities and services: This approach follows the work of Bain (1959) and identifies industries on the basis of a group of sellers of substitutable facilities and services to a homogenous group of buyers. Although the facilities and services for many convention centers may appear as close substitutes, the diverse types of events that occur across a range of venues cannot be considered substitutable. As well, the *form* of the experiential product (cultural festival vs. sports event) is unique across a range of events and the tacit knowledge of the event partners and partnerships is again not substitutable. Finally, the buyers in this case are not a homogenous group, and the different *forms* of events attest to the varying target segments that exist. Therefore, events do not classify as an industry on the basis of this approach.

Cooperation and collaboration: This approach identifies industries as a collection of firms that practice cooperative and/or collaborative activities. The two terms may be said to differ in formality with the former implying relatively casual or informal relations and activities between firms. Events foster various forms of collaborations, including with suppliers, vendors, travel agents, tour operators, industry associations, accommodation providers, marketing organizations, sponsors, regulatory agencies, media, and other private and public organizations in order to facilitate cooperative marketing, management, packaging, travel, lodging, training, research, and information sharing. As stressed by Leiper (2008), such cooperation creates *functioning industries*, which in the case of events function across and within many destinations and events. Therefore, the stability implied in cooperative and collaborative activities, is based on the nature of the event itself, or on the nature of the entities that collaborate. For example, in the case of recurring events, there is relative stability (Larson, 2002) in the strategic alliances that form to create and re-create the event, which is not the case for one-time events. As well, certain partner's to events are relatively stable across multiple types of events (e.g. hotels, public agencies, etc) while other partners are recruited depending on the needs of the event itself (e.g. artists for a music festival; vendors for a convention, etc). Therefore, through this approach, it is ambiguous whether events constitute an industry.

Strategic management: Leiper (2008) refers to three models in strategic management literature that require knowledge of the industry. These are the five forces model (Porter, 1979), industrial evolution (Porter, 1980), and industrial chains (Galbraith, 1996). In the case of events, the five forces (buyers, suppliers, competitors, new entrants, and substitutes) may vary across 1) the different event *forms* (e.g. cultural vs. business), and 2) the different industries that the event partners belong to, which do not necessarily compete with each other (e.g. waste management vs. media). Therefore, an *industry* is not readily discernible. As well, different *forms* of events at a destination are at various stages in their evolutionary life cycle, some more institutionalized than others. The same may also be said of the different events themselves, and of the various partners to events. Again, a clear industry does not emerge as one at a particular stage in the evolutionary life cycle. Finally, the magnitude of event scale and scope determines the size of the event value chain. The value chain of small-scale events is mostly destination or region bound, as are its impacts. On the other hand, large-scale events (like the

Olympics) generate linkages that are truly global. To consider these different types of events as similar would "conflate different entities" (Leiper, 2008). On the basis of industrial chains literature, large-scale events may constitute an industry, and that too only partially discernable. However, it would be a stretch of imagination to label all events in general as constituting an industry.

Estimates of number of attendees (tourism measure): This approach focuses on demand, not supply, and therefore does not qualify as a measure for an industry.

It emerges from the analysis above that events do not constitute an industry but emerge as a hybrid form of industry, one that straddles multiple industries across various private, public, and non-profit realms. As commented by Goldblatt, "the event sector is actually not one but many sectors" (2000, p. 3). It is no surprise therefore that research into events has seen application of stakeholder theory (Getz, 1997; Reid and Arcodia, 2002; Spiropoulos et al., 2006; Getz et al., 2007) in order to understand the power, urgency and legitimacy (Mitchell et al., 1997) of the key players, and of network theory (Erickson and Kushner, 1999; Larson, 2002; Stokes, 2004; Elbe et al., 2006; Stokes, 2006a, 2006b; Larson, 2008) in order to understand who these players are and what are the dynamic ties between them. These applications have helped us tremendously in developing taxonomy of the key parties and the unique power structures that reside amongst them, from a sociological perspective.

However, from a management standpoint, this author posits that events may be conceived of as a cluster (Porter, 1998) of interconnected firms, suppliers, related industries and institutions that arise in a particular location. Cluster theory differs from network theory in that the latter focuses on the actual relationship between actors (Knoke and Kuklinski, 1983) while the former focuses on geographic proximity and "concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field, linked by commonalities and complementaries" (Porter, 1998, p. 78). Research into special events has yet to apply cluster theory, though some work is in progress. More specifically, this paper posits that events constitute an asymmetrical cluster (Rugman and Verbeke, 2003; Porter, 1998) i.e. a cluster of firms that form strategic alliances around the flagship firm (i.e. the event organizer).

In order to measure the strength of the events cluster at a destination, this paper now presents the potential proxy measure that may be applied. This is followed by a discussion on cluster theory and specifically event clusters.

Can the Strength of the Events Cluster be Measured?

The framework applied to measure the strength, and hence the economic and ecological competitiveness and sustainability of the events cluster at a destination, is adapted from Porter's diamond of competitive advantage. Porter list's 1) firm strategy, structure, and rivalry, 2) related and supporting industries, 3) factor conditions, and 4) demand conditions, as the micro environmental context unique to each nation. This section adapts these contexts towards the case of events in order to develop measures of the strength of the events cluster.

Firms' strategy, structure and rivalry: Events are primarily induced clusters, with the event organizer performing the role of cluster champion. These are different than Porter's organically growing clusters where the strength of an industry is derived out of the symmetrical relationships within the cluster (Rugman and Verbeke, 2003). The event cluster derives its strength from the centrality of the focal firm. This measure can be operationalised through the number of ties that originate from the event organizer, i.e. the greater the number of ties originating from the event organizers, the stronger the events cluster.

In the case of the event clusters, related and supporting industries refers to the robustness of the event partner network. Hoffmann (2007) notes that the strength of the partner network, a key source of competitive advantage, can be measured through number of alliances, dispersion of alliances, redundancy of alliances, and linkage intensity. In the case of event clusters, robust partner networks are deduced to signal sustainable and competitive advantage.

Factor conditions, in the case of events, are the ability of the event organizers to garner support through government programs and industry sponsorships, and availability of infrastructure. This dimension can be operationalised through proxies like budgetary support from government programs and the level of sponsorship that the event organizers have acquired. As well, availability of event related direct infrastructure (stadiums, convention centers, parks, etc) and indirect infrastructure (transportation, security services, etc) bestow competitive advantage upon a destination's events cluster.

Demand conditions, in the case of events, are the number of visitors to events at a destination, as well the dispersion of these visitors. Also, revenue generation, relative to input, falls under demand conditions surrounding events. Finally, media coverage of the event helps create future demand for the city/destination and is therefore an important determinant of demand conditions. Favorable demand conditions as associated with a stronger events cluster.

In conclusion, an application of various approaches to identify an industry yields the fact that events do not constitute an industry. However, events are posited as an asymmetrical cluster encompassing a multitude of industries by this researcher. As well, based on the Porter's diamond of competitive advantage, proxies are proposed to measure the destination event cluster strength. However, it is noted that proxies provide an approximate comparative measure of the strength of the events cluster.

Cluster Theory

Porter (1998, p. 197) defines clusters as "geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries, and associated institutions… in particular fields that compete but also cooperate." Hence, both competition and cooperation are acknowledged as an important trait of clusters. Clusters, according to Porter, create international competitive advantage through local competition over critical resources amongst industries. Winners forge clusters with intense partnerships that explore synergies and complementarities in order to sustain their competitive advantage. As well, Porter (2000, p. 255) observes, "most cluster participants do not compete directly, but serve different industry segments." In the case of event clusters at destinations, some clusters may be seen as more economically successful than others, a signal of the cluster competitiveness. However, would such strengths in exploitation of synergies and complementarities translate into successful social and ecological outcomes as well?

Rugman and Verbeke (2003, p. 4) note, "a cluster may be built around one or a few core companies." They label such clusters as "asymmetrical" and argue that "a core firm or cluster champion is critical: it can be defined as a company that takes on a leadership role in developing and sustaining the cluster, thereby intentionally fostering the co-evolution of the organizations involved and the creation of spill-over effects arising from this co-evolution" (Rugman and Verbeke, 2003, p. 4). Asymmetrical clusters are posited as different to Porter's organically growing symmetrical clusters that thrive on internal competition. In the case of the former, the role of the focal firm(s) is paramount. Event organizers may be seen as the core firm(s) in the events cluster of a destination. Larson (2008) accords event organizers with the "strongest power position, based on legitimized authority to include and exclude stakeholders." Event organizers also assume centrality in event networks by nurturing the development and evolution of events, and the partner firms and institutions that form the cluster.

Another key difference between Porterian symmetrical clusters and asymmetrical clusters is the basis of their formation. Symmetrical clusters, as noted above, are organic and based primarily on "socially embedded relationships", while asymmetrical clusters are formed on the basis of calculativeness "in which the participants engage in a formal, private cost- benefit calculus" (Rugman and Verbeke, 2003, p. 4). Though "free-riders" to the cluster may also exist, their role in the creation of the event product is also recognized (Larson, 2002), and hence they are allowed to flourish.

Finally, boundaries of clusters, including event clusters, are difficult to define, as is visible in the analysis above, and therefore the entire cluster may be "obscured" and even go "unrecognized" "because parts of a cluster often fall within different traditional industrial or service categories" (Porter, 2000, p. 255). In the case of event clusters, organizations and/or associations with the specific purpose of bringing together the disparate parties of the event partner network, in the interest of a fruitful discourse on "common constraints, problems, and opportunities" (Porter, 2000, p. 255) exist (Arcodia and Reed, 2003) but may still require further institutionalization at the local level to unleash the sustainability potential of the cluster. This paper is a first attempt at applying cluster theory in order to understand the outcomes of event clusters, specifically ecological outcomes.

Sustainable Development Strategies and Clusters

The concept of sustainable development emerged from the Brundtland commission report *"Out Common Future"* wherein it is defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (UNWCED, 1987). Though the aim of the original report was to determine the relationship between economic development and the environment, over the years since, sustainable development has been associated with the three dimensions of economic, social, and ecological values. It may be argued that the societal dimension moderates the relationship between the other two values.

John Elkington is widely credited for popularizing the phrase triple bottom line (TBL). The TBL approach aims to align the economic profitability goals with wider goals of societal equity (e.g. culture preservation) and ecological preservation. TBL, an accounting approach, aims to re-define criteria for measuring success across these economic, social, and ecological outcomes. However, as pointed out by Norman and MacDonald (2004), a single measure of performance across the three dimensions of sustainable development is *false* promise made by the TBL approach.

Separately, Vanclay (2004) notes that there are numerous other conceptualisations of the TBL values, pertaining to economy, ecology, and society, which correspond with the wider sustainable development rhetoric. He further highlights accountability measures for the three dimensions originating from impact assessment literature as environmental impact assessment, social impact assessment, health impact assessment, environmental management systems, and strategic environmental assessment.

However, as an approach towards sustainability, TBL has seen greater application in industry than these other approaches from impacts assessment literature, and is widely recognized in both academic and practitioner circles. As noted by Vanclay (2004):

“The triple bottom line is emerging as a popular conceptualization and reporting vehicle for articulating corporate social, environmental, and economic performance and is receiving significant attention in connection with its efficacy and sufficiency as a means for reporting the extent to which an organization meets its societal responsibilities.”

Within events management literature, Sherwood (2007) develops indicators for a TBL evaluation of special events. However, he too acknowledges a “broad range of tangible and intangible pre-event and post-event impacts” (p. 12). In order to develop a “parsimonious event framework,” Sherwood focuses on a “small number of short-term post event impacts” (p. 12).

In strategic management literature, corporate responsibility implies the closest commitment to the TBL approach. Schwartz and Carroll (2007) place sustainability as one of numerous frameworks that study the business in the context of its environment. These frameworks also include, but are not limited to, the approaches of business ethics, corporate social responsibility (and performance), corporate environmental responsibility (and performance), stakeholder management, and corporate citizenship. While important differences exist amongst these frameworks, the underlying principle behind them aims to address individually or comprehensively the three sustainable development values of ecological conservation, distributive justice, and economic profitability. Corporate citizenship, the most recent addition to the family of sustainability strategies, adds value by enhancing the responsibilities of the corporation to the community it operates within, allowing for a social license to operate.

However, numerous debates range under the rubric of each of these approaches as to what level of commitment an organization should devote towards non-economic goals. For example, in the context of corporate social responsibility, Schwartz and Carroll (2007) note that two schools of thought exist on the role of business in society, i.e. profit maximization within legal parameters vs. broader social responsibilities. Doane (2004) notes that companies like British American Tobacco, British Petroleum, and even British Aerospace are frequently cited as being sustainable, some included in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. However, she points out that the net impacts of these companies, their products, and their policies are inherently unsustainable. Therefore, one of the underlying mechanisms for sustainability strategies appears to be the values in effect. The question of whose definition of sustainability should be applicable remains unanswered in management literature.

McDonough and Braungart (2002) provide an interesting perspective on values driving sustainable development. As shown in the “Fractal Triangle” below, although *true sustainability* is the large inverted triangle in the center, sustainability values may be seen as aligned in greater proportion to the dimension/corner where they are primarily anchored. Hence, equity (social) actors may consider the importance of ecology and economy, but will anchor their arguments from a societal value standpoint. Hence they would derive their own form of *true sustainability* as the middle ground in the four triangles within their corner (i.e. 1).

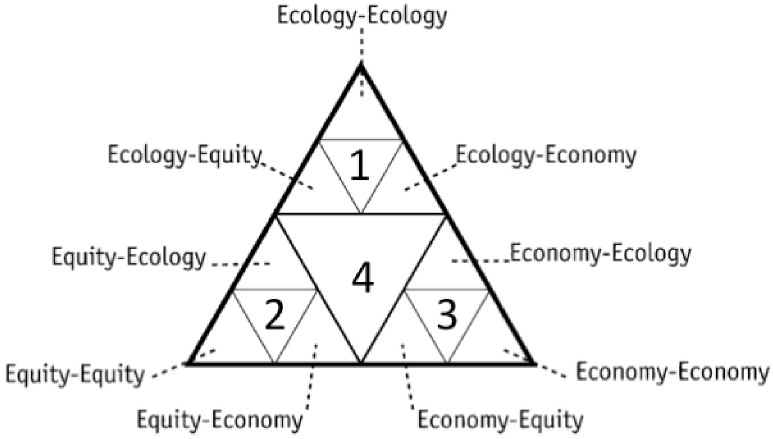

Figure 1: Fractal Triangle of Sustainability

Source McDonough and Braungart, 2002

From the above, it may be understood that

There is considerable diversity in conceptualisation of strategies to address economic, social, and ecological sustainability.

Such diversity in conceptualisation is driven by the values where the strategies are anchored.

Therefore, this researcher proposes that the strategies of sustainability are incomplete without the values that they are anchored in. In order to truly understand sustainability strategies of a cluster, the underlying mechanisms of such strategies need further clarification. Therefore sustainability strategies are posited as emergent. This researcher contends that cluster sustainability strategies are a function of:

The values of the strategy drivers (focal firm, management, etc). The ability of the focal firm to provide strategic direction to the asymmetrical cluster is posited by Rugman and D'Cruz (2000) while sustainability value types and strategies are argued by Costanza (1997) and Rondinelli and Berry (2000).

The alliance partner configuration (stakeholders, channel partners, etc). The dimensions of strategic alliances are offered by Hoffmann (2007).

The broader environment as enabler or constraint (environmental regulations, resource constraints, etc). The importance of environmental regulations is tested by Henriques and Sadorsky (1999) while freedom of choice (environmental determinism and equifinality) is argued by Hrebiniak and Joyce (1985).

The three drivers of sustainability strategies are now presented in the context of events. The emergent sustainability strategies follow. Henceforth, for the purposes of this paper, events are understood as large-scale tourism events that capture export market for a destination. Getz (2008) notes, "From the tourism industry's perspective, typically through the eyes of a DMO or event development agency, events are highly valued as attractions, catalysts, animators, place marketers, and image-makers" (p. 406). Such events are usually large scale and involve a multitude of stakeholders and impacts. Getz (2008) notes that the management of event tourism is a "relatively unexplored research theme" (p.

417) and that there is need for environmental impact assessment of tourism events. One of the aims of this research proposal is to further this area of research

Sustainability Strategies and Event Clusters

Various types of focal firms (event organizers) lead the development and management of events and provide strategic direction to the asymmetrical events cluster (Rugman and D'Cruz, 2000). Each of these focal firms is rooted in potentially different corners of the fractal triangle (Figure 1). For example, perhaps corporate organizers of notable events (e.g. conventions, exhibitions, etc) consider profits as the driving motive while not-for-profit notable event organizers (e.g. folk festivals, cultural festivals, etc) cite social values as the driving force. The involvement of the public sector further conflates the situation with political and potentially ecological goals.

Costanza (1997) notes that human values are driven along two worldviews, one calling for behavioral change in consumption habits to solve environmental problems, and the other implying the technology may emerge as a solution to environmental problems. He labels the former the "technological pessimist" and the latter the "technological optimist." Costanza (1996) asserts that the "technological optimist" believes that the key issues surrounding sustainable development, i.e. those of energy and resource limits to growth, will be absolved through innovation in technology. On the other hand, the "technological pessimist" takes the opposite view in Costanza's conceptualization, calling for immediate change in the resource consumption habits of humanity, arguing that energy and resource limits to growth will not be solved by technology.

Through use of a game theoretic model, Costanza (1997) presents four quadrants, with the real state of the emergent world along one axes and the current policy along the other (see figure 2). What is visible is that should the optimist policy be wrong and yet followed, we face disaster. Such disaster is also predicted by the Club of Rome publication Limits to Growth (Meadows, et al., 1972) and the independent assessment of its analysis with observed data from 1972-2002 (Turner, 2006). However, this discussion is outside the scope of this paper. This paper proposes that the technologically optimist or pessimist worldview be applied to understand the sustainability values of the event organizers as focal firms.

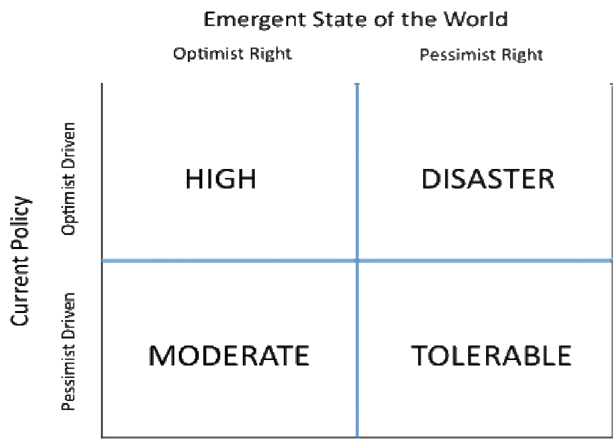

Figure 2. Payoff matrix for technological optimism vs. pessimism

Source Costanza 1997

Importantly, controls must be added for positive surface values with no action on the part of the focal firms (e.g. green-washing). Hence, while the above measure is complete onto itself, in order to increase its validity, commitment to sustainability values must also be ascertained through tangible investments toward sustainability initiatives. Rondinelli and Berry (2000), in a content analysis of 38 multi national companies, identify 3 externally oriented and 5 internally oriented corporate citizenship programs that signal to the sustainability strategies of firms. The 3 externally oriented programs are "1) incentives for corporate employees and managers to collaborate with external stakeholders on environmental improvement projects; 2) philanthropic activities that support community, national, and international efforts to improve environmental conditions; and 3) strategic alliances between MNCs and environmental and public interest groups to solve crucial environmental problems" (p. 75). As well, the 5 internally oriented programs are "1) enhanced regulatory compliance to reduce the corporations' negative environmental impacts of hazardous emissions in communities in which they are located; 2) adoption of pollution prevention and clean manufacturing practices that prevent pollution before it occurs; (3) redesign of products and processes to achieve more beneficial environmental impacts for customers and communities; (4) materials reduction, recycling and re-use; and (5) resource conservation" (p. 78). In the context of events, these eight programs can be modified to serve as tangible measures of the focal firm sustainability values.

It is posited that the focal firms values ascertained through determination of whether the focal firm is a technological optimist or skeptic, as well as the tangible commitments it demonstrates through the eight indicators of 1) incentive to employees to collaborate on sustainability initiatives, 2) philanthropic activities that benefit the community environmentally, 3) strategic alliances to improve environmental performance, 4) enhanced regulatory compliance to reduce negative environmental impact, 5) adoption of pollution prevention and clean practices, 6) redesign of products, services, and processes to achieve positive environmental impacts, 7) materials reduction, recycling, and re-use program, and 8) resource conservation, would guide the sustainability initiatives of event clusters.

Proposition 1: The focal firm (i.e. event organizer) values on sustainability are positively associated with emergent sustainability of an event.

A second consideration impacting the sustainability strategies employed at notable events is that of partner networks. As noted by Wallner (1999, p. 51), efficiency improvements "can only develop [their] full potential in the context of industrial networks. It is not the [efficiency] approach itself that lacks the potential to contribute to sustainable development, it is the developed methodology of implementation." The various partners that form strategic alliances toward a notable event both inform and help implement the sustainability values of the event organizer's they interact with. Through such interaction, relationships and capabilities are both generated and improved upon.

As noted by Hoffmann (2007) the alliance partner configuration (number, linkage intensity, redundancy, dispersion, and stability of alliances) is strongly associated with both acquiring new competencies and relationships, as well developing upon existing ones. In the case of notable events, a strong alliance partner configuration allows for information gathering and processing towards sustainability strategies, flexible, coordinated and faster execution of strategies, through strong communication links.

Proposition 2: The strength of the alliance partner configuration is positively associated with the eventual sustainability of an event.

Finally, the environment (as constraining or enabling) can potentially influence sustainable development strategies employed by events organizers. Henriques and Sadorsky (1999) find government regulation to be a positive force in the sustainability actions of managers in Canadian firms. Porter (1998) too acknowledges the importance of government in the diamond framework. Therefore, regulation may be posited as an enabler. As well, many promoters (e.g. International Olympic Committee) choose to drive the environmental strategy of the event, and therefore promoter interest too is considered as an enabler of sustainability in events.

However, numerous constraints are cited pertaining to resources (financial), infrastructure availability (e.g. access to public transport) that may prevent the implementation of sustainability at an event. At the same time, Hrebiniak and Joyce (1985, p. 338) assert, "Even in the most constricting and debilitating case of environmental determinism, equifinality indicates that organizational choice nonetheless exists as a separate independent variable important to the development of a dynamic equilibrium with the external environment." Here, in the case of constraining (high) environment (determinism), organizational choice is rendered neutral due to lack of control over exogenous factors. In the context of events clusters, where exogenous factors limit or restrict freedom of choice, constraining environment is posited to be a negative force. On the other hand, environmental regulation or promoter interest to promote sustainability at events is considered an enabler.

Proposition 3a: A constraining environment is negatively associated with the eventual sustainability of an event.

Proposition 3b: An enabling environment is positively associated with the eventual sustainability of an event.

Large-scale events lead to diverse impacts upon the destination. While there can be no true objective measure of such events across the three dimensions of sustainability, event organizers attempt, at numerous degrees, to assess the impact of such events. Even though many event organizers carry out an impact assessment exercise in order to obtain government funding or corporate sponsorships, the role of events in the larger society and environment are increasingly under review. However, as noted by Dwyer et al. (2001), many of the impacts of events are intangible and therefore extremely difficult to measure. As well, the interconnectedness of the three levels of impact (economic, societal, and ecological) confounds the measures further. In the face of such resistance, it is not surprising that many event organizers have avoided the dimensions of sustainable development altogether, instead focusing on the measurable economic impacts alone. However, techniques are increasingly available for the measurement of ecological impacts (ecological footprint, environmental impact assessment, etc). As well, the measures around the societal impacts (e.g. crime, traffic, crowding, property damage, vandalism, etc) are emerging, but as yet underdeveloped. Therefore, this proposal focuses upon the ecological performance of events.

In measuring the ecological performance of the event, ecological footprint analysis (EF) (Wackernagel and Rees, 1996) is offered as the optimal technique as it offers a standardized unit of measurement that facilitates comparability across all resources consumed. While other standardized units of measure are also available (e.g. emergy, carbon emissions), the ecological footprint analysis is particularly amenable for the measurement of the ecological impacts of events. Colins and Flynn (2008, p. 755) assert, "One potentially large contribution is that as the EF relates to the consumption activities of a defined population, it potentially has many applications." As well, Colins and Flynn (2008) have recently applied ecological footprint analysis (as per the methodology developed by the Stockholm

Environment Institute) to measure the environmental sustainability of the UK Football Association Cup Final in Cardiff and found the measure effective.

Hunter and Shaw (2007, p. 47) note, “The EF provides an aggregate estimate of demands upon the biophysical productivity and waste assimilation capacity of nature imposed by human lifestyles.” In short, EF relates human consumption of source and sink resources to the amount of biologically productive land and sea area needed to regenerate such resources. Therefore, EF facilitates the comparison of the ecological footprint of an activity by accounting for consumption of energy, biomass (food, fiber), building material, water, and other resources. Such consumption is presented as a normalized measure of land area called ‘global hectares’ (gha). Holmberg et al. (1999) note that by providing for just humans, the biologically productive land and sea allows for a 2.3 gha EF per capita. Further, they remark that an allowance of 12% of such space for other species leaves a permissible EF of 2.0 gha per capita. On a more somber note, the per capita footprint of an average Canadian is almost 7.0 gha. Therefore, environmental sustainability strategies need to account for current rate of consumption as well.

This researcher proposes that the EF of an event be assessed as its emergent sustainability strategy and therefore our criterion variable. EF as an emergent sustainability strategy can be categorized across four potential outcomes:

EF Amplification Strategy: Through this emergent sustainability strategy, it is proposed that the EF of an event will be assessed as appreciably higher than that of another event.

EF Continuance Strategy: Through this emergent sustainability strategy, it is proposed that the EF of an event will be assessed as approximating the average EF of another event.

EF Reduction Strategy: Through this emergent sustainability strategy, it is proposed that the EF of an event will be assessed as appreciably lower than the EF of another event.

EF Engagement Strategy: Through this emergent sustainability strategy, it is proposed that the EF of an event will be substantially lower than the EF of another event.

Further, the three drivers of sustainability strategy discussed earlier (focal firm values, alliance partner configuration, and environment as constraint or enabler) are applied as the predictor variables. Thereby, the following framework is developed (see Figure 2) for the classification of the drivers of sustainability strategies in the context of events.

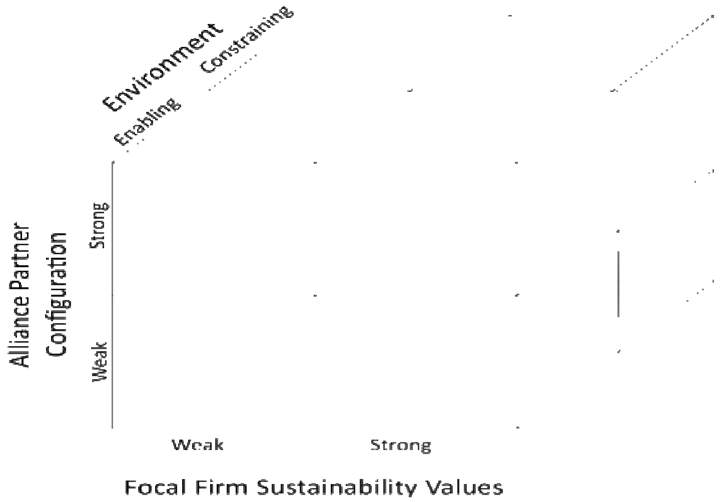

Figure 3. Proposed conceptual framework for classification of drivers of sustainability strategies for notable events

The framework above is applied to generate the following hypotheses. In the first case we assume that the environment is posited as a constraint in implementing sustainability strategies due to lack of regulation, resources, promoter policy, etc. However, the focal firm, i.e. the event organizer, has strong sustainability values and intends to drive such values along its partner network. As well, the partner network is large, stable, strongly interconnected with inbuilt slack due to redundancy, and allows for a diversity of opinions to emerge with solutions. Such a network will potentially fast forward the sustainability strategy of the focal firm. Therefore:

Hypothesis 1: Under the condition of a constraining environment, strong focal firm values, and strong alliance partner configuration, the event will pursue an EF reduction strategy.

In the second case, the environment condition holds, as does the alliance partner configuration. However, the focal firm values are weak towards sustainability issues. In this case, the drivers of sustainability strategies are dependent purely upon the alliance partner configuration. Therefore:

Hypothesis 2: Under the condition of a constraining environment, weak focal firm values, and strong alliance partner configuration, the event will pursue an EF continuance strategy.

In the third case, the environment is posited as an enabler, and focal firm values are strongly sustainability oriented. However, the alliance partner configuration is weak and therefore sustainability drivers are partially hampered. However, the alliance partner network may step up to the task, enabled by the environment. Therefore:

Hypothesis 3: Under the condition of an enabling environment, weak focal firm values, and strong alliance partner configuration, the event will pursue an EF reduction strategy.

In the fourth case, the environment is again posited as an enabler. As well focal firm values are strongly sustainability oriented and the alliance partner configuration is strong and thereby capable in the implementation of sustainability values. The condition thus derived allows for the strongest possible implementation of sustainability principles. Therefore:

Hypothesis 4: Under the condition of an enabling environment, strong focal firm values, and strong alliance partner configuration, the event will pursue an EF engagement strategy.

In the fifth case, the environment is posited as a constraint upon the sustainability initiatives. As well, the alliance partner configuration is weak thereby further hampering any sustainability initiatives. However, the focal firm values are posited as strongly sustainability oriented and therefore the driver of sustainability for the event. Therefore:

Hypothesis 5: Under the condition of a constraining environment, strong focal firm values, and weak alliance partner configuration, the event will pursue an EF continuance strategy.

The sixth case depicts a constraining environment with a weak alliance partner configuration. As well, focal firm values are not sustainability oriented. Here all three parameters are functioning against the sustainable outcome of the event. This is the weakest condition possible as all the drivers of sustainability are working against an emergent sustainability strategy. Therefore:

Hypothesis 6: Under the condition of a constraining environment, weak focal firm values, and weak alliance partner configuration, the event will pursue an EF amplification strategy.

In the seventh case, the environment is posited as enabling, allowing for resources, compatible infrastructure, and potentially event promoter policy towards sustainable development. As well, focal firm values are a strong driver of sustainability principles. However, implementation is hampered due to weak alliance partner configuration. Therefore:

Hypothesis 7: Under the condition of an enabling environment, strong focal firm values, and weak alliance partner configuration, the event will pursue an EF reduction strategy.

Finally, in the last case, the environment is posited as an enabler. However, the other two drivers of sustainability, i.e. focal firm values and alliance partner configuration, are weak and therefore unable to fully capitalize upon the opportunity of implementing sustainability principles. Therefore:

Hypothesis 8: Under the condition of an enabling environment, weak focal firm values, and weak alliance partner configuration, the event will pursue an EF continuance strategy.

Methodology

A mixed-method three-stage approach is proposed in order to conduct this research. The first stage would entail interviews with the event organizers. The second stage would entail a mail-in survey, which is appropriate given the type of information required and the relative novelty of the ecological sustainability concept, especially in the case of events. Survey research is widely applied in business studies. For the purpose of testing the hypotheses above, it is perhaps the most appropriate method. Finally, EF analysis will be conducted for the two events.

The measures will be developed based on the classification provided above. The adapted scales are provided in Appendix A. The reliability of these scales will be tested through internal consistency method, and a minimum Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 will be sought. Content validity of these scales will also be tested through consultation with independent experts from academia and industry (i.e. face validity). Lastly, a limitation of the survey method is response bias. The questionnaire design will attempt to control for this. Once again, the key variables are listed below, as is their operationalisation.

Dependent Variable:

Ecological Footprint: Independent assessments will be conducted to measure the EF of each notable event studied. This is potentially a monumental task and therefore will impact the time commitment required for this study. The methodology applied by Colins and Flynn (2008) will be replicated here

Independent Variables:

Focal firm values: Adapted from parameters developed by Costanza (1997) and Rondinelli and Berry (2000),

Environment: Adapted from Hrebiniak and Joyce (1985)

Alliance Partner Configuration: Adapted from Hoffmann (2007)

Control Variables:

Nature of event – As noted in an earlier section, events can be of numerous types including business, entertainment, educational, cultural, political, etc. In this case, sampled large-scale events studied would also be controlled for type of event.

Event duration – This variable can be a dichotomous variable differentiating between same day events and multiple day events. Same day events generally do not entail overnight stay and therefore need to be controlled for

Event frequency – This variable can again be dichotomized based on whether the event is a one off phenomenon or a regularly occurring event

This study will be conducted over a period of one year across two large events across two destinations. The choice of more than one destination is deemed essential in order to facilitate comparability, and control for any destination specific bias. However, it is noted that this is not a random sample, and therefore results may not be generalisable due to sampling error. At the same time, considering the broad similarities of large-scale event organizers, especially across North America, not too much variation is expected in the population.

The DMO's of two destinations will be contacted via telephone and email to identify the main event venues in the city. As a next step, the DMO's, hotel planners, convention centers, and the other key event venues will be contacted via telephone and email to identify events, and their organizers. DMO's will be requested for a letter of support addressing both event organizers and their partner network in order to gain legitimacy and ensure sufficient response rate.

Initial contact will be established with the sampled event organizers and an interviewing process will ensue. Initial interviews will establish the course of action for surveying both the event organizer and the event partner network. A list of the event partner network will also be requested at this time, including contact details. Finally, a letter of support for the research will be requested from the event organizer to add legitimacy to the initiative.

The survey questionnaire (as noted above and in Appendix A) pertaining to focal firms will be mailed with a cover letter explaining the purpose of this study. Letter of support from the DMO, and a return envelope will also be included to improve response rate (account for non-response error). Follow up telephone calls will be made every week for three weeks. A second survey will be sent if earlier survey was not received (this latter survey may also be emailed or sent via facsimile). A letter of support for this study, as mentioned above, will also be sought, in order to gain legitimacy with their partner network.

Based on the list of partner network received from event organizers, a survey questionnaire (as noted above and in Appendix A) will be mailed with a cover letter explaining the purpose of this study. Letters of support from the DMO and event organizers will also be included along with a return envelope, again to ensure adequate response rate. Follow up telephone calls will be made every week for three weeks. A second survey will be sent if earlier survey was not received (this latter survey may also be emailed or sent via facsimile).

In order to test the hypotheses developed in this paper, the statistical tool that needs to be applied has to fit the model. The dependent variable, in this case is categorical and the independent variables are continuous. Therefore, MDA (Multiple Discriminant Analysis) is the most appropriate statistical test. The goal of MDA is to classify cases into three or more categories using continuous variables as predictors. MDA is similar to MANOVA, and the overall Wilk's Lambda derived is analogous to F-test in regression model.

Finally, legitimacy to this study may be derived through its unique methodology, and incorporation of the ecological footprint in relation to notable events in tourism destinations. Here common method bias is avoided because the dependent variable is not self-reported by the event organization or its partner network.

Conclusion

Special events constitute a unique form of product that supports the strategic economic and societal development goals of *places*. Events of various types are an important facet of civilizations in developing and developed nations. They are recognized for their positive socio-cultural and economic impacts and are pursued by the public, private, and not for profit sector voraciously. However, whether special events constitute an industry is a question that remained to be addressed. This paper begins by classifying special events as asymmetrical clusters, with a core firm leading the partner network. Given the importance of the core firm in leading the asymmetrical cluster, this research proposal developed hypotheses around the core firm values, and also the alliance partner configuration and level of environmental determinism. Based on the conceptual model developed, pro-sustainability values of the core firm and a strong alliance partner configuration are hypothesized to have a positive association with the ecological sustainability of the festival. As well, the environment is posited to serve as either an enabler or constraint to the ecological sustainability of the festival. Finally, the ecological footprint is offered as a dependent variable to test the hypotheses. Should adequate support be garnered for these conjectures, policy and managerial implications arise in giving direction to sustainability initiatives of events.

However, implicit in this proposal are two key limitations. First and foremost, a small sample of only two events does not allow for generalisability of results. However, it is critical to point to the exploratory nature of this study and to the inherent similarities amongst event organizers across North America whereby not too much variation is expected in the population. Secondly, this proposal focuses on large-scale tourism events that cater to the export markets of destinations. Therefore, these results might not be applicable across small-scale local events.

Appendix A

Event organizations will be surveyed to determine –

FOCAL FIRM VALUES

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINISM

LIST OF PARTNERS FOR AN EVENT – TO FACILITATE PARTNER SURVEY

Event partners will be surveyed to determine –

ALLIANCE PARTNER CONFIGURATION

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINISM

On a scale of 1-7 (low to high)

ALLIANCE PARTNER CONFIGURATION – Add and Average by scale, and again across entire event.

Number of partners – In your estimate, compared to other large-scale events in the city, how large, is your partnership network for XYZ event?

Linkage intensity – In your estimate, on average, how strong is the relationship intensity of your partnerships for XYZ event?

Redundancy – In your estimate, on average, what is the level of overlap in your alliance network for XYZ event?

Dispersion – In your estimate, on average, how different are the areas of competencies of your alliance network for XYZ event?

Stability – In your estimate, on average, how stable are the relationships with your partners during the course of XYZ event?

FOCAL FIRM VALUES – In the case of multiple firms, add and average across entire focal firm network

Technological progress, such as hydrogen cells and fusion energy, will eliminate the environmental challenges that we have.

Governments should sanction companies that fail to pursue environmental goals.

Environmental resources are plentiful; therefore, consumers need not change their behavior toward use of fewer resources.

Fossil fuels will remain the primary source of energy as no economically feasible alternatives will emerge and the rate of consumption will not drop.

Corporations and consumers need more market incentives to motivate environmental behavior change.

Governments at all levels (national, provincial/state, and city) should be leaders in setting environmental directions.

Scientists and science will continue to advance solutions for scarce resources through development of new alternatives.

Scare resources will go to those who can afford to buy them, resulting in price wars.

My firm provides adequate incentive to its employees in order for them to collaborate on sustainability initiatives

Please provide incentive structure: _____________________________

My firm provides adequate charitable contributions for the community it operates in to benefit environmentally

Please provide amount donated last 3 fiscal years: ________________

My firm engages in developing partnerships with other firms, institutions and/or individuals in order to improve our environmental performance

Please provide 3 specific examples: ___________________________

My firm is proactively compliant with environmental regulations (4 signals compliance, greater than 4 signals enhanced compliance)

My firm applies pollution prevention and clean practices

Please provide specific examples: ______________________________

My firm engages in the redesign of products, services, and processes to achieve positive environmental impacts

Please provide specific examples: ______________________________

My firm engages in reduction, recycling, and re-use of materials

Please provide 3 specific examples: ___________________________

Please provide any usage statistics available: ____________________

My firm engages in resource conservation

Please provide 3 specific examples: ___________________________

ENVIRONMENT – As constraint or enabler – Pooled scale will be developed for each notable event. An average measure will be taken based on responses received and averaged across the event

Promoter interest in sustainability – In your estimate, on average, how interested was the promoter in the sustainability component of XYZ event?

Regulation – In your estimate, how helpful were environmental regulations in conducting XYZ event sustainably?

Equifinality – In your estimate, what level of options were available to implement sustainable development at XYZ event? (Number of options to achieve the same sustainability outcome)

Funding/Sponsorship – In your opinion, how adequate was the budgetary provision towards implementing a sustainable XYZ event?

Infrastructure and Technology: In your opinion, how adequate were the infrastructure and technological solutions implementing sustainability at XYZ event? (Availability of public transportation, waste management, etc)

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ZAGREB TIME MACHINE CREATING NEW ATTRACTIONS

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Abstract

Croatia is mostly known as the holiday destination with beautiful nature, beaches and islands. Most recently, in March 2009 the Spanish edition of Conde Nast Traveler proclaimed Croatian islands as the most beautiful in the world. Dubrovnik is the most known tourist town of Croatia, and very often this is the only city that foreigners know about in Croatia. The national tourist promotion has been based for decades on the seaside while the continent has been only sporadically mentioned, partially because of the war and postwar effects, and mostly because the seaside options have been always stressed as the unique competitive advantages of Croatia. Only recently, the program of support for the continental tourism is being developed. The development of the continental tourism has been left mostly to the local initiative, either of the tourist boards or private entrepreneurs.

In such situation, Zagreb has a very particular position. It is the capital of Croatia, the administrative, business, political, cultural, university and gastronomic center of the country. It is a Central European city (with Austro-Hungarian influence since it was the third center of the Austro-Hungarian Empire) with the strong Mediterranean flavor due to the mentality and mixed cultures. It offers relaxing atmosphere, friendly and warm environment. However its tourist potentials are not valorized in an appropriate manner.

In order to enhance the awareness about tourist values of Zagreb, the Tourist Board created the project called „Zagreb Time Machine“ which consists of four main programs on different locations on Saturdays from April to October: „Promenade Concerts“, „Upper Town in the Past“, „Upper Town Musical Panorama“ and „Folklore Performances“. The aim of those attractions was to present to foreign visitors the historical characters who marked the past of the city, the urban and rural images of Zagreb how once it was – with authentic peasants in national costumes, horse carriages, street organ, antique market. Citizens are invited to come dressed in costumes from the 19th or beginning of 20th centuries, which is a special attraction for tourists.

The analysis proved that the goal has been fully reached and that Zagreb has become actually an open theatre which enables interaction with spectators, who can even dance at the sounds of music in the Music Pavilion and win awards.

The paper explains the planning and the realization of the project, the volume of engaged resources and the possible further developments based on visitors reactions.

Key words: capitalm, tourist potential, creation, new attractions, Zagreb Time Machine

Introduction

Croatia is a tourist country which has been positioned recently as one of the top world destinations. It is largely known as the holiday destination with beautiful nature, beaches and islands, outstanding gastronomy and culture. Most recently, in March 2009 the Spanish edition of Conde Nast Traveler proclaimed Croatian islands as the most beautiful in the world. Dubrovnik is the best known city and very often is the only city that foreigners have heard about in Croatia. The slogans ("A small country for a big holiday", "Mediterranean as it once was") are holiday and seaside oriented. The continental part of the country used to be only sporadically mentioned in the national tourist promotion, partially because of the war and post-war effects, and mostly because the seaside options have been always stressed as the unique competitive advantages of Croatia. Although the inside of the country is rich with various attractions the support program for the continental tourism is being developed only recently. The continent is being included slowly in the presentations abroad and at press conferences of the National tourist board and trade fairs.

Tourism in Zagreb

Zagreb is the capital of Croatia, the administrative, business, political, cultural, university and gastronomic centre of the country. It is a Central European city (with Austro-Hungarian influence since it was the third centre of the Austro-Hungarian Empire) with the strong Mediterranean flavour due to the mentality and mixed cultures. It offers relaxing atmosphere, friendly and warm environment.

Although the recovery of tourism from the war and post-war effects has been slow, in the past several years a continuous increase of arrivals has been noted.

Table1. Statistics of visitors arrivals and nights

	2008		2007		2006		2005	
	arrivals	nights	arrivals	nights	arrivals	night	arrivals	night
foreign	464.067	812.246	441.345	792.800	390.767	707.839	356.742	641.321
domestic	174.094	325.256	166.260	310.142	147.949	292.584	138.743	284.707
total	638.161	1.137.502	607.605	1.102.942	538.716	1.000.423	495.467	926.028

However the tourist potentials are not valorised in an appropriate manner. The local media and citizens still do not see Zagreb as tourist destination.

The Zagreb Tourist Board financed the Tomas research done by the Institute for Tourism for several years. The results of the analysis showed the level of satisfaction of visitors, the weaknesses and strengths of the Zagreb tourist offer. The Zagreb Tourist Board was particularly interested in learning about the activities of tourists in Zagreb, because based on those information it was possible to create new added values.

Table 2. Tomas research – Activities in Zagreb

results	trends	ECT trend
1. Most visited locations Ban Jelačić square, Cathedral, open market, Upper Town, Centre 2. Jarun, Maksimir, botanical garden 3. Most active – tourists from Japan, Spain, USA	1. Visits to surrounding area drops 2. Not interested in museums 3. Shopping centres	1. Sightseeing 2. Museums 3. Cultural tourism demand grows

The visitors coming to Zagreb are mostly oriented towards individual sightseeing. It is interesting to see that they are not interested in visiting museums, while according to ECT museums and cultural tourism are latest trends. Almost all most visited locations are within walking distance in the very centre of the town. During many years there were several attempts to establish the regular city tours, but even with the strong financial support from the Zagreb Tourist Board the project encountered various problems. The City of Zagreb and its transportation company finally introduced the hop on hop off bus this summer.

After analysing the Tomas findings, the Zagreb Tourist Board came to conclusion that the street attractions should be created, based on the history and culture. Therefore with the purpose to enhance the awareness about tourist values of Zagreb, the Tourist Board started first with the „Promenade Concerts“, the project which developed through several years into the „Zagreb Time Machine“ which consists now of four main programs on different locations on Saturdays from April to October – already mentioned “Promenade Concerts”, „Upper Town in the Past“, „Upper Town Musical Panorama“ and „Folklore Performances“. The aim of those attractions was to present to foreign visitors the historical characters that marked the past of the city, the urban and rural images of Zagreb how once it was – with authentic peasants in national costumes, horse carriages, street organ, and antique market. The project has another side as well – it is communicating with the local population, giving emphasize to the elegant atmosphere of past days from the beginning of century and trying to explain the tourist face of Zagreb.

The project

The Zrinjevac park is centrally located and very close to the main city square. At the beginning of the past century it used to be the favourite place of citizens where they liked to spend their free time. The Music pavilion of the Zrinjevac park was donated to Zagreb in 1891 by the citizen and estate owner Eduard Priester. For almost a century the people of Zagreb have enjoyed listening to the music which was regularly performed on Saturdays but then in the former Yugoslavia the tradition was interrupted for many years.

Herein is the chronology which shows how the project initially called “Promenade Concerts” grew into the “Zagreb Time Machine”, following the opinion and feed back from the visitors.

2000

The Zagreb Tourist Board started the project “Promenade concerts” on 27 May 2000 with very modest concept: it included only the music program, only one bench with tourist information and souvenirs and one peasant who was selling flowers. The promenades took place from May till the end of September on Saturdays from 11 am-1 pm. Various ensembles played classical, pop and folklore music. The main goal was to revive the urban atmosphere of old Zagreb and to give life to the park.

2003

In 2003 the organization was entrusted to “Kings of Street”, a famous street singers, very popular in Croatia who successfully organize several other street festivals. They represented Croatia at the Eurosong 2008 contest, and they regularly open and close the Promenade concerts.

Additional programs were added:

- Sales of antiques, books, souvenirs, painting exhibition
- Quick photo - a photographer was making photos on the spot in an old fashion style, in costumes from the beginning of the century (those who wanted to take photo could chose from several costumes)
- Children workshops and play area – children could draw under the guidance of an educator
- The presenter and staff at the tourist information bench were dressed in costumes from the beginning of the century.

2005

In 2004 the chairs were bought in order to make more comfortable attending the concert. The number of chairs at the beginning was small, and with years it was increased to 120 today.

The horse carriage was introduced – people could ride in a coach, at the opening and closing promenade concert (free of charge).

2006

A prize competition for best costume from 19th or 20th century was introduced for all visitors of the promenade concerts:

At the end of the series of concerts the person who was dressed in the most imaginative costume was awarded with a free week-end in Opatija

That award turned to be a great motivator for people to come dressed in costumes from the beginning of the century. Some of them designed and made costumes specifically to take part in the contest.

A new program was also initiated under the title *“Folklore Performances on Saturday”:* the authentic folklore groups from the surroundings of Zagreb come to the centre of the city, walk through streets where usually tourists go, and sing songs of the old days. Those peasants in beautiful original costumes offer to tourists homemade sweets or apples and other fruits from their gardens.

2007

A new prize competition was introduced: Best dancers. At the end of the series of concerts the best dancers were awarded with a free week-end in Opatija, and it motivated people to dance at the music in front of the Music Pavilion. Today it is a large dancing hall on the open air.

A new program was added under the title “*Upper Town Musical Panorama”*.Street musicians (“Zagrebački cinkuši” and Potepuhi quarter”) play and sing ballads and love songs in the streets of the Upper Town, near the historical Lotrščak tower. The Upper Town is the historical part of Zagreb, with numerous important buildings of historical and tourist interest, obligatory place to visit for all tourists. It is also the location of the Croatian parliament and government offices.

Since 2007 the World Tourism Day is celebrated at the Music Pavilion.

2008

Another program was introduced: “*Upper Town in the Past”* – characters from legends or heroes from chronicles of old Zagreb – postman, city guard, newsboy, street organ, lamplighter, Manda (a character from the legend of Zagreb about the origins of the name Zagreb), Marija Jurić Zagorka (the first Croatian lady journalists) – they walk around the centre, meet tourists and explain to them in several languages about the history of Zagreb. The lamplighter lights the gas street lights in the Upper Town. An agency was hired to choose and train young people to act as those characters. The Zagreb City Museum was engaged to give the design of the costumes and description of each. The Zagreb City Museum has an inspiring event “Living Pictures in Zagreb City Museum” which introduced a museological interpretation and presentation by the living history method.

A character Ivana Brlić Mažuranić, named after the famous writer for children, was introduced to entertain children during the promenade concerts.

Because of great interest, horse carriages were introduced to ride every Saturday and not only for the opening or closing concert.

All of those programs (Promenade Concerts, Upper Town in the Past, Upper Town Musical Panorama and Folklore Performances on Saturday) got one name: “*Zagreb Time Machine*.”

2009

Another historical character was added – ban Jelačić who tells the story about the history of Zagreb together with Manda.

A group of Zagreb medieval knights perform fights and romantic story from the history in the Upper Town.

The attendance has been measured regularly since the first year of promenade concerts. At the beginning 500-800 citizens attended the event, but in the last two years the number rose to 1500 persons per concert. At least 150 seated visitors are registered every Saturday. It is the result of enriched program, with better financial support and continuous publicity. The promenade concerts are becoming a tradition and many regular visitors can be met every Saturday.

The new added projects resulted with more cost for the Zagreb Tourist Board which could be seen from the following table. It must be stressed that there are various companies which support financially the project as well.

Table3. Cost of project in EUR

	2000	2007	2008	2009
Cost of project	20.300	34.300	48.000	48.000

Conclusion

One of the roles of Zagreb Tourist Board, as the strictly non profit organisation is to create non commercial attractions. The results of the Tomas research proved that the average tourist in Zagreb is not interested much in visiting museums, but prefers to visit the most important locations. In order to offer the experience of living museum, the Zagreb Tourist Board planned and organized a series of events which have in common the atmosphere of old Zagreb from the beginning of century. A part of events is interactive and requires the active participation of visitors. In order to motivate them to come, to dress in retro costumes awards are granted at the end of the series of events.

The analysis proved that the goal has been fully reached and that Zagreb has become actually an open theatre which enables interaction with spectators, who can even dance at the sounds of music in the Music Pavilion and win awards.

It is also evident that new attractions should be added every year in order to complete the project. The feedback has been very positive, from the citizens, but also tourists. The hotel receptions are informed on regular basis and a brochure is being published every two months with the full program of the promenade concerts. The cooperation with hotels and travel agencies for promotion of the project is essential and a lot of efforts is being done in that sense.

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MIND THE GAP – SOME REMARKS ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF EXPERIENCES AS SPECIAL EXPERIENCES

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Abstract

Experiences are what the world is made of. In the events-industry experiences are said to be the key feature for distinction form other marketing tools. In tourism the touristic experience a stereotyped design of a setting has emerged. This paper proposes to look at experiences in these realms as aesthetic experiences. These, in the emergent and contingent world of human beings, can only be communicated. The model for this is that of a speaker-listener, not of a sender-receiver. This notion carries some practical consequences that lead to the development of domains for a specified uses and gratifications approach.

Reflection

From ongoing research I want to take out some basic and preliminary findings and reflections. The focus is on the event industry and its products and offers, yet I assume and know (from conversations with my hospitality and tourism studies colleagues as well as special interest magazines and my own experience in working with those fields as an event organizer) that experience as an individual capacity taking place within a psycho-physical system named human being can and will apply to hospitality and tourism studies as well.

My theoretical background can be described as social constructivism plus systems theory based on authors such as Berger, Luckmann, Schütz, Luhmann, Ungeheuer, Maturana, Varela and others.

This working paper, being of a somewhat limited scope, will necessarily present findings of a somewhat limited scope. Yet I do hope that you will not find the thoughts herein to be of limited scope, though I have to acknowledge that relating abstractions and experiences, being of a subjective and an aesthetic nature, in a foreign language does limit the potential. So I will not stop to use those endlessly long German sentences even here. And the perspective I take and the examples I use, are German, as my argument structure is. Sorry.

The argument I will present and develop in this paper comes in four steps and briefly goes as such:

experiences are universal to human beings and necessary,

experiences are always constructed,

those special experiences in the event industry are aesthetic experiences,

aesthetic experiences are prone to special universal conditions of human communication,

which leads to a proposal for a different way of looking at events: number five.

Saying so I will start with number one. The statement that everybody equipped with a body and a brain has experiences seems trivial. To rephrase a well-known dictum by Paul Watzlawick: You cannot not experience. And maybe it is trivial, yet in western philosophy starting from day one somewhere in Greece, experience, and related to this perception, are topics of never-ending deepest reflection. To review the existing body of knowledge here would go too far. I will only name some names and state a general position with respect to the question discussed here and in order to later get to the practicalities of use of the term “experience” in the events industry. To step off the track for a second, let me mention that in German we do have two words expressing what in English is called experience. They are “Erfahrung” and “Erlebnis”. They do portrait the distinction between a more pragmatic and/or empirical line of thinking and a more idealistic line of thought. More could be researched in this field in regard to the heuristics of experience creation.

Take any self-respecting dictionary of philosophical terms, be it English or German, for example Eisler (1904), you will come upon those names (among others): Aristotele, John Locke, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Hubert Fichte, Georg Friedrich Hegel. I will not discuss these here. The general direction of an argument, based upon those thinkers, could be: everything that is being perceived via the senses is an experience, may it be an inner experience (cognitions and emotions) or an outer experience (events). From modern neuropsychological research by Antonio R. Damasio (2004) and epistemological theory (Ronald De Sousa 1987) we now know that this distinction (in a way) is obsolete, as any experience is a combination of an emotional as well as cognitive event. And event in this context does not signify what the events industry does mean by using the term event. To finish off this very first step I would like to point out that human beings do need this very special feedback mechanism called “experience”. Without it survival would be impossible. Only by actively perceiving and evaluating, and again by re-evaluation through comparison to former experiences the human race was able to develop something like a culture. A feedback that connects the present moment with the past and the future moments with us standing in the center in a here and-now complex does supply us with the possibility of choice to run away from the lion or to tame that beast. The definition that reflects my own point of view and that will show implications further on is the one by the American pragmatist thinker William James: “My experience is what I agree to attend to.” (James 1890:402).

This directly leads to number two: experiences are always constructed. Perception is an active undertaking. Reality, as we have seen, is the result of perception leading to and being processed as experiences. Reality is the product of permanent feedback processes and as such precarious. It is constantly threatened by misunderstanding, forgetfulness, suggestive powers of force or love. Yet perception its not – often mentally modeled after the eye, thought to be a passive organ – a passive undertaking. We do not take in from the world. We actively select what we want to perceive. The psycho-physic system called human being is a whole set of filters. The senses filter input based upon patterns of former experiences, recollected and stored in the brain. Prejudices, judgments already in existence before our contact with reality begins, steer our processing; this holds true for communication as well (see Maturana/Varela 1984 and Ungeheuer 1987). Thus we – and all living organisms – do construct our reality, as consciousness always is intentional.

Sociologists Berger and Luckmann in 1962 were the first to explicitly elaborate on the term within the framework of a sociology of knowledge. They stated and proved: “Reality is socially constructed” (Berger/Luckmann 1969: 1). In constant and ongoing processes of externalization, objectivation and internalization day to day reality is being constructed by humans through their physical and mental activity. In coming into contact (with another human being as a mediator and at the same time as an object of my reality) I start to interpret according to my prejudices. Lead by sign systems as symbolic mediators (such as language) I negotiate my reality. Experiences, however stored in the brain and body are inaccessible to others. To gain access we do need language and more. Access is granted upon sympathy and trust. They as mechanisms of organic systems do necessarily reduce the otherwise overwhelming complexity of reality (Luhmann 2008). Selective choice by granting attention to segments and details of reality thus ignoring and not perceiving the immensely complex rest, is pacifying. The distinctive marker for our attention is a difference that really makes a difference (Bateson 1981:582)). Reality is ordered by relevances (see Schütz 1967 and Berger/Luckmann 1969:46), forming individual relevance structures. They constitute patterns and sets of prejudices that lead and limit our contact with reality. So what comes into my mind – to be constituted as an experience – has to pass several filters to end up as a memory:

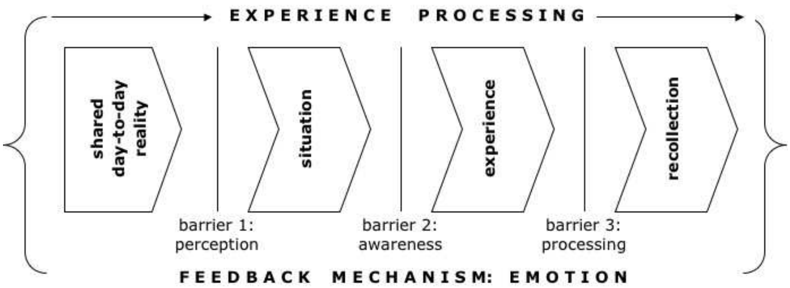

Figure 1: Scheme of Filters of the Experience Process

From perception, guided by the situation, the stage of awareness is being reached. Awareness, in itself an active process in front of a horizon called world, leads via feedback provided by emotions, to the actual experience. Some being processed and valued again in accordance to further prejudices will then be stored as recollections which in turn direct the perception of our day-to-day reality. A vicious circle of endless feedback.

To finish off this expedition there is need to mention that thus systems are being constructed, and do construct themselves. The process called autopoiesis (Maturana/Varela 1984), roughly translated as self-creation, is the guiding principle. Men, as a non-trivial machine (a trivial machine is one producing a predictable result, like most coffee machines do, or at least we assume they do), has to exist within an autopoetic system (aka world or everyday reality) that is emergent, contingent, and ephemeral. Here communication is the mode of construction and relation creating the problem of principal inaccessibility of the social other and the basic problem of deception and misunderstanding. Communication is not understood as a mechanistic sender-receiver model. More on this under point four and five.

From the construction of reality via the use of symbolic systems and symbolic interaction I would like to single out a special feature closely related, in my opinion, to events. It is the aesthetic mode and does take us to step number three. Experiences in the realm of events are rarely classified. At least in my research in Germany I could not find categorizations or a matrix of experiences from an attribute-centered and content-oriented point of view. Events are being denoted as being special. Or they are denoted – somewhat awkwardly – regarding their function: public events, corporate events, consumer events, employee events, exhibition events, charity events (FME classification 2008). In the tourism or leisure industry it might look different – see the ATLAS Aalborg conference 2009. For the English Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Network (2007) the classification reads "extraordinary". In this research events were included. This very general attribute separates the ordinary everyday life from some exceptional happenings that lead to those extraordinary experiences does signify a trend in society. Yet we would clearly have to look into what is the ordinary, the "Lebenswelt" (Schütz) as phenomenology does, to get a clue what might be beyond this (God?). Even before authors Pine and Gilmore came up with the marketing term of an "experience economy" (Pine/Gilmore 1999), Walt Disney, father of all commodified modern experiences, dealt with those concepts (regarding the history of sensational sensations see Wünsch 2008). The enclosure and sequestration of such experiences in modern society, no longer clustered by class but by a lifestyle concept, Gerhard Schulze describes in his "Erlebnisgesellschaft" (Schulze 1992). He comes up with a matrix of milieus that are closely linked to sets and clusters of special experiences, being named as "Niveaumilieu, Harmoniemilieu, Integrationsmilieu, Selbstverwirklichungsmilieu, Unterhaltungsmilieu" (Schulze 1992:277 ff).

Coming back to the above mentioned Network paper: this being a "Resource Guide" for the industry, one would expect that the central term experience is defined. Yet the meaning of "experience" and how experiences come about is presupposed. One assumption for this might be that, as communication, experience is such a common and self-evident concept that it is rarely paid attention to, less being thought about or defined in applied sciences. Fishes do not define the water either, I assume. Yet, without selective interest, experience would be utter chaos (James 1890:402). Solemnly the fields and sectors of experiential offers, their applications, are being eclectically mixed and portrayed: "attractions, travel, tourism, sports, events, corporate, MICE, catering, food, hotels, retail." (Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Network, 2007). The event industry, to separate one field, in its daily practice does use these terms rather carelessly as in "experiential marketing" (Jack Morton Worldwide, an event agency or Bernd H. Schmitt, a business consultant) or "Erlebniskauf" and similar composite (more to this see Wünsch 2007) without looking into process and meaning.

Three. In order to gain insight, focus meaning and foster understanding for application, I want to propose to connotate and signify the experience gained at events as an aesthetic experience. How and why will follow but please let me point out that the German understanding of events is different from the English one. In German the often used English term "event" always carries the connotation of something special. Yet what especially does special mean? Research conducted by me in 2008 in a qualitative way among twenty poignantly selected industry experts showed, that the combination of special and aesthetics does not appear among the descriptions connected to events. Special is not being defined in regard to an individual or life, rather it is packaged by the producer of the experience, and consumers better believe. Closest to aesthetic then is the term "design" as in product design. Nevertheless design must not be aesthetic as we all know being surrounded by design forced upon us in our everyday existence.

What, now, does "aesthetic" mean? The term has originally (at least for German thinking) been defined by Immanuel Kant in close relation to Baumgarten who in 1735 developed aesthetics as a separate philosophical discipline. In short Kants argument goes as such: we need to differentiate between beauty or the beautiful as a category of sensuality and perception, thus performing under the category of the transcendental or pure reason, and the pleasant or pleasing, thus falling under the realm of the practical or judgments of taste (Kant 2008). Both categories though do point out to the purely subjective status of aesthetics, connected to sensations or sensuality; or: beauty lies in the eye of the observer. The pleasant, and here we are getting closer to modern day design, is the useful. Use and pleasure are related in beauty. Bauhaus and Werkbund to which the world owes the dominance of sober and practical angular forms in buildings and products defined modern Western aesthetics culminating in the globally adaptable furniture system of IKEA.

In combining the beautiful, being sensed and sensually experienced with utilization aspects we easily arrive at carefully designed and marketed leisure industry packages of sun, sand and surf. All these notions, especially those of the advertising industry, play upon the traditionally learned aesthetical concepts of our Western civilization. I do not want to wander further into the realm of the aesthetic here in this paper. To finish off this argument I would like to connect aesthetics with modern neurobiological findings. The question is if there is something like universalia; universal moments in the recognition of the aesthetic. As Wolfgang Welsch points out, pattern recognition does strongly hint into this direction. In pattern recognition we adhere to a sense of order that is being experienced as beauty in the form of harmony. The golden ratio is such a pattern or the sequential Fibonacci numbers (Welsch 2009:97).

In order to understand aesthetic experiences and their sensual impact, we need to look at the construction of meaning. Which brings us to step four: communication. Let us have a look at the communication models mainly offered in marketing and other applied economic activities. The general idea of corporate communications and product communication is that of a sender and receiver. This rather mechanistic model presupposes that there is something like a message, that goes from A to B and arrives like a parcel which only needs to be opened and the object that was sent appears unchanged. That this does not hold true when subjects (human beings) are involved led to the theoretical construction of a black box. Therein all that could not be explained – such as the most common and most normal misunderstanding – was put in. With this trick all that was bothersome about communication was resolved as it was never to be seen again. And the advertising industry could happily go on sending messages that strangely enough somehow never did arrive.

I would like to propose another model. Following Gerold Ungeheuer I would like to define communication as a social action and interaction created, constructed, and performed by human beings, mostly in presence of each other, conducted via signs, in constant feedback in order to reach a certain common understanding of what is going on and to steer each other in this process step by step (Ungeheuer 1987). To grant the possibility of this kind of understanding which is most unlikely as every person is an isolated island and has his or her own individual theory of the world, accessible only by communication, three preconditions exist: a category of an overriding social action, social rules, socio-perceptive contact and a culturally defined set of rules. Semantics and meaning are a product of cooperation and social construction. Yet a meaning is never fixed it is an ongoing process that only temporarily comes to a halt as a speaker and a listener take turns in speaking and listening. Instead of a sender and receiver we thus need to talk of a speaker and listener who only together can construct a world. The decisive focus is on the listener, not the speaker, as only the listener decides what he or she understands. Communications in this sense are events that intend listeners to make certain experiences, experiences of understanding.

Understanding aesthetic communication – such as art, or event as well – having been defined as something pleasing and useful, we must now take a look at the uses people make of offers. These offers could be words, sounds, images, all signs of communication. It is only communication that is being offered in interaction of human beings. Thus we deal with observers of the second order (Luhmann 2005) being observers observing other observers observing observations. The product of aesthetic communication in the end is an experience.

Aesthetic communication as interaction only occurs in social situations. Thus the term "situation" would need to be defined leading to standard situations with habitualised routine uses. In mass communication research and theory a model has been established, called "uses and gratifications approach" (Blumer/Katz 1974). It was developed to look into the consumption of television programs. The idea was to establish typical patterns of active choice in correlation with bonuses the TV viewer would name as a gratification received from watching. This does not mean quantitative consumer research of the kind "which color do you like better" but looking beyond a construct of satisfaction into the parameters of active construction of exceptional experiences. I do name them exceptional or special as an expectation was attached and an active selection was made: watching A usually excludes watching B. This audience centered approach is in line with the general model of interpersonal communication of speaker and listener. People do have a choice and act accordingly in using mass media. The notion that the media do not influence at all though I cannot accept. Instead, in the light of Ungeheuers theory of communication it needs to be stated that populace and media influence each other accordingly as the mass media are a system and the populace its environment cooperating in the duplification of reality (Luhmann 1996).

Transferring the notion of uses and gratifications onto the realm of those special aesthetic experiences I come to argument number five. I strive to establish a matrix of relevant uses. In doing such I do not want to exemplify a general theory of human needs and wants, though I hold Maslow's terminology in respect as a valid theory except for the establishment of a hierarchy of needs. I want to exemplify a pragmatic observation of uses taken from learning theory, mass communication theory and own qualitative research. In doing so, I arrive at a list of nine probable general domains of uses and their potential gratifications.

SOCIAL acceptance, interaction, integration, involvement, love and being loved, flow, commitment, group, responsibility, being honored and thanked, values, …	**COMPETENCE** experience of own ability, realization of own ideas, accomplishment, experiencing of own capability and will, testing and application of something, …	**AUTONOMY** self-awareness, self-esteem, self-assurance, individuality, experience of own power, recognition, pride, choice, relevant borders, …
INFORMATION knowledge, content, understanding, eloquence, presentation, density, exchange, novelty, relatedness of offer to actual and future application and use, …	**DRAMATURGY** rhythm, theme, packaging, story, story telling, suspense, meaning, sense, sensibility, timing, congruence, catharsis, surprise, duration and length in time, …	**UTILIZATION** applicability, private and professional usefulness, instant and long-term practicality, relevance for job, social and group standing, …
BALANCE Sense (intellectual, spiritual): in relation to myself, a whole / not too much – not too little, just right for recollection, appropriateness, adjustment, …	**FUN/JOY** pleasure, style, entertainment, diversion, sights, design, luxury, satisfaction, sharing, thrill, being part of something, being touched, …	**QUALITY** Overall real "material" quality: catering, hotel, organization, transport, sustainability, social responsibility, venue, location, …

Figure 2: Matrix of Potential Event Uses and Gratifications Domains

This scheme in its graphic expression and order does not imply a hierarchy, relatedness, or closeness. The exemplifications of the single domains portrait the possibilities of the respective set. All of these sensations and effects of uses are potentially incorporated in aesthetic communication and can be realized as experiences triggered by an event.

The practical value of this lies in the acceptance of the steering potential towards a prerequisite of the possibility of understanding as the cooperative effort of host and guest, to name another dual entity close to speaker-listener. Bearing this in mind the focus of an experience designer – as we might call those people in the arts, design or tourism field – will move away from the two-dimensional display of signs in magazines or TV and move onto recognizing the three-, correctly four-dimensional necessities and embedding of meaning and message. Thus the situation comes into focus and the scene on which this experiential play takes stage. Using this metaphorical horizon I do not intend to argue in favor of the so called “performative turn” in humanities, yet I want to acknowledge the work of Erving Goffman. Thinking of this, the packaging and production of leisure environments, of events in regard to the uses of guests can be seen differently: what they perceive and use is what they get. Nothing more. And not what the host plans. That planning as a form of design is futile in saturated markets is at least shown by the fact that in Germany ninety percent of new products brought to the supermarket shelf vanish within a month.

Still planning becomes a bit more secure (and what else could we do but act) considering the above mentioned matrix. The general construct of “satisfaction” which might result out of experiencing those qualities, is an integral part of an aesthetic experience. The pragmatist philosopher Dewey in “Art as Experience” does name movements of athletes, machines digging big wholes, conscious gardening and more as such aesthetic experiences that find pleasure in themselves while being useful (Dewey 1988:11). The qualities of use might be portrayed as qualia or “Qualizeichen” (Peirce 1990:48), a complex of the inter-subjective experiential content of a mental state. It is part of the sign and part of the situation and user at the same time. This needs to be and will be researched further. Qualitative interviews with event practitioners look into the heuristics of event producers and qualitative interviews with guest will deepen the applicability of the proposed matrix. The research on the topics talked about here will conclude in 2010 with a book: “Event als Kommunikation: Rahmen, Steuerung, Wirkung”.

One directly practical implication I want to point out before I finish. The connotation of use and useful in the field of aesthetics does not convey with the connotation in the economic field. The rational animal “homo economicus” as the crash test dummy of economics does not know of beauty. And the pleasant effects of something are not the result of a quick and dirty cost-use-calculation or costing. Economic games theory (Bolton/Ockenfels) does show that human beings in real situations are rather complex organisms. Using a simplistic calculus means retreating to the sender-receiver model. That does not signify that advertising is obsolete, it shows that it is a game. An experiential package or offer is more than a set of predefined signs and rules for the host or salesperson. It is a dance to be danced by (at least) two.

Minding the gap between message, meaning, and memory does help to get along better under emergent and contingent conditions. Or, as Hamlet stated: “Readiness is all!” (Shakespeare 1603).

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FESTIVALS AND CULTURAL EVENTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN LOCAL RESIDENTS AND TOURISTS IN SPONTANEOUS PURCHASE

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Abstract

Festivals and cultural events draw considerable attention among academics and practitioners. The flower market at the Chinese New Year Festival is one of the most popular events in Macau, in which spontaneous purchases are made. This study attempts to investigate how local residents and tourists responded in their spontaneous purchase when exposed to stimuli at a special event held infrequently for a short period of time. A quota sample of 150 local residents and 100 tourists was recruited in November, 2007. The results indicate that product quality, price, and variety are the top three priorities among both local residents and tourists when making purchasing decision at the flower market. Significant differences of free sample tasting and cultural tradition were found between the two segments in purchase intention. The findings allow marketing activities to be highly targeted according to the difference response of local residents and tourists.

Keywords: Chinese New Year Festival, flower market, cultural tradition, free sample tasting, purchase on impulse

Introduction

Festivals or cultural events if carefully designed not only attract local residents' and tourists' participation, but also produce high economic impact in the community. In particular, a special event which highlights a social experience in an infrequently occurring event where there are specific rituals, celebrations, performances or presentations, would add considerable benefit to the community tourist industry (Jago and Shaw, 1998). The impact largely depends on a systematic design which integrates all marketing efforts to offer enjoyment for all who attend regardless of the cost of admission. Many academics have undertaken research on festivals and special events due to its rapid growth and development. Most studies have examined the management of the event organisers, the economic and social impact of festivals and special events, organising and staging special events, motivation of the attendees and residents' attitude and perception towards a mega event (e.g. Crompton and McKay, 1997; Frisby and Getz, 1989; Gursoy et al., 2004; Koh and Jackson, 2006). Most have focussed on planning and organising an event from a host perspective. Little research has looked at the success or failure of a special event hosting a number of individual vendors, such as the flower market at the Chinese New Year Festival, yet the presence of individual vendors may be a factor giving attendees satisfaction and causing them to revisit (Koh and Jackson, 2006). Even less research has been conducted on the 'retail event' of individual vendors at the event/festival and how their marketing activities create a stimulus to attendees' to purchase in a climate of a high level of competition in the restricted period of the event.

This study attempts to investigate how visitors, including local residents and tourists responded in their spontaneous purchase when exposed to stimuli at a special event held infrequently for a short period of time. Yeung (2008) states that marketing mix activities may create a stimulus to trigger consumer impulse to purchase under a festival atmosphere; as a result the level of spontaneous purchase is increased. Moreover, the impulse effect differs from one person to another, and is probably dependent on the motives of those attending a special event. A tourist may desire for cultural enrichment whereas a local may want to enjoy inter- or intra-group socialization (Crompton and McKaym, 1997). Identification of an attendee's response helps to develop marketing elements at a special event in an optimal level. As such, the impulse effect of the marketing mix strategies between local residents and tourists is also investigated.

The flower market at the Chinese New Year Festival was chosen for the study as the festival can be defined as a special event featuring specific ritual and traditional celebration, because of its long history back to the Han Dynasties (207 BC – 219 AD). The rationale of choosing this event is firstly due to its infrequent occurrence (i.e. held only once a year), which would be perceived by local residents or tourists as an opportunity for a cultural experience beyond everyday routine (Getz, 2005). Secondly this event is increasing in popularity which is reflected in the rising numbers of admitted and a new location added in recent years (Vakio, 2009). Thirdly, most products sold in the event contain cultural elements, such as peach blossom representing romance, tangerine plants representing long-lasting relationships, kumquat representing prosperity and a variety of Chinese paintings and snacks for good fortune (Turner, 2009). Chinese traditional cakes were chosen to feature the cultural element and these included sticky rice cake, taro cake, and turnip cake etc; it is a tradition to eat these cakes at the Chinese New Year Festival to wish good luck at the beginning of the year (HKTB, 2007). Hence the festival celebration held in Macau is a unique opportunity to examine the influence of stimuli on attendees' spontaneous purchase.

Special Events, Spontaneous Purchase and Marketing Mix

Special events including national day and the festival are unique moments to mark a special occasion for celebrating a ritual and cultural ceremony (Goldblatt, 2008). Such events probably attract many more residents and tourists because of their infrequent occurrence and the fact that they provide leisure, social and cultural experiences outside the normal range of choice. The situational environment link with the consumer's excitement of attending the event and can combine to form a unique retail environment so achieving a mutual satisfaction for both the organiser and attendee (Koh and Jackson, 2006). The number of those bidding for a market booth continues to grow in recent years as business opportunities may occur at this special event. Inevitably, the atmosphere of a market place is not under the control of individual retailers, but consumers are exposed to many stimuli which are largely marketer-controlled, such as product characteristics, product position on the shelf, and so forth (Kotler, 1973). As such, stimuli may come from marketer-controlled factors or otherwise.

Spontaneous Purchase

Spontaneous purchase is not necessarily unplanned, but is unlikely to be pre-planned to a large extent (McGoldrick, Betts and Kathleen, 1999). Rook and Hoch (1985) define spontaneous purchase as a sudden desire to act, being in a psychological disequilibrium state, and a decline of cognitive evaluation towards the product being offered. They suggest that the consumer's purchase desire is changing from stage to stage after receiving an unexpected stimulus that brings to the consumer a rapid change in psychological state driven by conscious and unconscious mental processes (Piron, 1991).

Previous studies noted that under the influence of the festival atmosphere and exposure to a marketer controlled stimulus enhances the consumers' desire to purchase on impulse (Applebaum, 1951; Yeung, 2008). In other words, not only does a change of retail environment alter a consumer's mental state from a rational to an emotional desire to purchase, but also the product display, price, packaging, and promotion, as well as cultural traditions specifically encourage spontaneous purchase (e.g. Crawford and Melewar, 2003; McGoldrick, Betts and Kathleen, 1999).

Non-marketer Controlled Stimuli

The non-marketer controlled stimuli may come from the festival itself as the atmosphere increases the level of excitement and anticipation which motivates consumer spontaneous purchase intention. Kotler (1973) comments that a carefully designed retail environment (well planned festival setting in this study) can produce specific emotional effects in the consumer that heighten his/her purchase probability. He further suggests that the atmosphere can be considered as part of the total product. An enjoyment of the retail atmosphere would affect the mood toward impulse buying. A good mood causes people to reward themselves more generously in order to maintain a positive mood state (Cunningham, 1979), which subsequently moves on to spontaneous purchase (Rook and Gardner, 1993). Under such conditions, many purchases are likely to be made on impulse, because the consumer feels no time pressure at the festival as it is outside the everyday routine. Beatty and Ferrell (1998) found that the more time available, then the greater likelihood to impulse buy.

The motive for visiting a special event or festival can be a factor in spontaneous purchase because a motive is a desire to meet the need which in turn influences behaviour (Iso-Ahola, 1980). Though visitors engage in the same festival elements, they may derive different benefits from the experience due to their own particular motive. The motives of local residents probably differ from those of tourists. The latter may like to learn about other cultures whereas the locals desire to interact with friends and relatives or just enjoy being present at the event. Crompton and Mckay (1997) suggest that eating festival food at the event is a means of experiencing a cultural tradition. These individual differences play an important role in the impulse purchase process (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998).

Marketer Controlled Stimuli

Apparently, marketer controlled stimuli play a major role in consumer spontaneous purchase when the consumer is exposed to these stimuli from the product on the spot. Four key influential factors, namely promotion, product, place and price are identified (Yeung, 2008). Koh and Jackson (2006) investigated these four factors and their effects on the intention of attendees to visit or revisit a county fair in a study on special event marketing. Crawford and Melewar (2003) explain that the exclusive nature of the product at the site adds desire to the impulse purchase. The impact of stimuli may be different for those on holiday compared with those more used to the market. The custom of bringing home gifts from holiday makes the unique festival products attractive and stimulating. The normal buyer behaviour assessment process will give way to impulse due to a higher disposable income for spending on holiday.

Consumer products that are considered to be impulse items in particular are those characterised by low price or a wide choice, and provide benefit to the consumer. Food products, such as snacks have a higher impulse influence on consumer purchase than non-food products comparatively (Rook and Hoch, 1985). Many academics have shown that promotional devices induce purchase (Appebaum, 1951; Isoline and Macomber, 2002). These promotion items are grouped in categories like displays, pricing, sample tasting and sales talks. The shape, size and packaging of products all play their part in spontaneous purchase. A friendly smile from the sales person in the store contributes to the whole situation. The location or decoration, such as a brightly coloured market stall, can trigger impulse purchase (Rook, 1987). The design of the area can create good effects on the purchaser (Kotler, 1973).

Hence, the following hypotheses can be generated:

H1. Non-marketing control element is important for spontaneous purchase at the flower market at the Chinese New Year Festival.
H2. Marketing control element is important for spontaneous purchase at the flower market at the Chinese New Year Festival.
H3. There are differences in response to the marketing mix elements between locals and tourists at the flower market at the Chinese New Year Festival.

Research Design and Methodology

The study aims to achieve those three objectives which include a rating of stimuli on spontaneous purchase, and a test for the difference between locals and tourists towards stimuli that cause spontaneous purchase in the context of the flower market at the Chinese New Year Festival. Following a review of relevant literature, a questionnaire containing 13 statements which include two non-marketing controlled elements (festival atmosphere and cultural tradition) and 11 marketing controlled elements was developed. Each item was measured by a five-point Likert-like scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The questionnaire was refined, pre-tested and finalised after several revisions with 12 persons to improve its clarity, readability and the content validity. A quota sampling method with 150 local residents and 100 tourists was conducted to address the third objective. Each respondent was requested to complete a self-administered questionnaire, without the interviewer’s interference, in order to avoid interview bias. The survey was carried out at the different locations for the flower market, such as Senado Square, Rua de Cunha and Fisherman’s Wharf in Macau. The mall-intercept technique was used, where the next respondent was approached until the number of samples in each quota was met. The data were subjected to SPSS for analysis. The mean score for each stimulus was computed, ranked and tested for significant difference from the indifference threshold of three. The t-tests were conducted to identify any significant difference between the two quota groups, namely local residents and tourist.

Results and Discussion

A total of 247 useable questionnaires out of 250 were obtained with 3 unusable questionnaires being removed due to omissions in completion. Of the 247 respondents, 153 (61.9%) were female, 155 (62.8%) below the age of 35, 139 (56.3%) with an income over MOP5,000 per month. Similarly, for the residents, 100 (69%), 94 (64.8%) and 88 (60.6%) were female, below the age of 35 and with an income over MOP5,000 per month respectively (Table I).

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

	All Respondents	**Local Residents**	**Visitors**
Gender			
Male	94 (38.1%)	45 (31%)	49 (48%)
Female	153 (61.9%)	100 (69%)	53 (52%)
Age			
16 or below	13 (5.3%)	6 (4.1%)	7 (6.9%)
17-24	142 (57.5%)	88 (60.7%)	54 (52.9%)
25-34	57 (23.1%)	28 (19.3%)	29 (28.4%)
35-45	17 (6.9%)	10 (6.9%)	7 (6.9%)
46 or above	18 (7.3%)	13 (9.0%)	5 (4.9%)
Marital status			
Single	180 (72.9%)	107 (73.8%)	73 (71.6%)
Married	55 (22.3%)	32 (22.1%)	23 (22.5%)
Divorce	5 (2.0%)	6 (4.1%)	5 (4.9%)
No comment	7 (2.8%)	0 (0%)	1 (1.0%)
No. of children			
0	197 (79.8%)	120 (48.6%)	77 (75.5%)
1	25 (10.1%)	13 (9.0%)	12 (11.8%)
2	20 (8.1%)	8 (5.5%)	12 (11.8%)
3 or above	5 (2.0%)	4 (2.8%)	1 (1.0%)
Occupation			
Student	106 (42.9%)	59 (40.7%)	47 (46.1%)
Housewife	45 (18.2%)	34 (23.4%)	11 (10.8%)
Employee	83 (33.6%)	47 (32.4%)	36 (35.3%)
Retired	2 (0.8%)	2 (1.4%)	0 (0%)

Self-employed	9 (3.6%)	1 (0.7%)	8 (7.8%)
Others	2 (0.8%)	2 (1.4%)	0 (0%)
Av. Monthly income			
MOP5,000 or below	108 (43.7%)	57 (39.3%)	51 (50.0%)
MOP5,001-10,000	65 (26.3%)	47 (32.4%)	18 (17.6%)
MOP10,001-15,000	57 (23.1%)	34 (23.4%)	23 (22.5%)
MOP15,001 or above	17 (6.9%)	7 (4.8%)	10 (9.8%)

Note: Total number of respondents: 247

The overall mean scores and the standard deviations together with the ranking for each item of scale from 1 to 5 for all respondents are shown in Table 2. The mean score of the items was used to measure the influence of the non-marketing control and marketing control stimuli on spontaneous purchase at the flower market during the Chinese New Year Festival. The mean scores ranged from 3.36 to 4.19 which were significant at the1 per cent level above the indifference threshold of 3 which represents neutral. The results indicate that the respondents considered that these elements exercise stimulation on them at a different degree. Overall, the rating of product quality was the highest (t-value = 21.024, $p < 0.001$). Next in rank of importance was product price, followed by product variety, price discount, cultural tradition, stall decoration, convenient location, healthiness, sales person in the stall, festival atmosphere, free sample tasting, packaging, and accompanying gift.

Table 2. Mean score of Non-Marketing Controlled Stimuli and Marketing Controlled Stimuli on Spontaneous Purchase

Stimuli	**Mean score**	**Std. deviation**	***t-value***	***p-value***
Product Quality	4.19(1)	0.887	21.024	0.000
Product Price	4.11(2)	0.992	17.576	0.000
Product Variety	3.98(3)	0.855	18.079	0.000
Price Discount	3.74(4)	1.063	10.896	0.000
Cultural Traditions	3.67(5)	1.090	9.687	0.000
Stall Decoration	3.66(6)	0.979	11.108	0.000
Convenient Location	3.66(7)	0.939	10.530	0.000
Healthiness	3.62(8)	1.048	9.289	0.000

Sales Person at the stall	3.55(9)	1.034	8.430	0.000
Festival Atmosphere	3.53(10)	0.966	8.562	0.000
Free Sample Tasting	3.46(11)	1.143	6.291	0.000
Packaging	3.45(12)	1.014	6.901	0.000
Accompanied Gift	3.36(13)	1.083	5.169	0.000

Notes: Total number of 247 respondents. The rankings are in parentheses.

All the mean difference is significant at 0.01 level, one-tailed with test value of 3.00

Comparatively, marketing control elements rank higher than non-marketing ones though all have a positive influence on consumer spontaneous purchase. The results support the findings from previous research of a positive relationship between marketing mixes and consumer impulse purchase intention. For example, decoration of the stall can create an image or feeling about the store, product and price (Willen, 1995) and is a visual stimulus to spontaneous purchase due to the sensory aspects of the retail environment (Zacharias, 1997; Wakefield and Baker, 1998); a gift with the purchase offer works very well in triggering consumer purchase (Handford, 2005; Yeung and Yee, 2009); convenient packaging for general purchase choice (Vermeir, van Kenhove and Hendrickx, 2002); and salesperson – interaction is important to outweigh the importance of physical environment on purchase (Hightower, Brady and Baker, 2002). These indicate that the marketing mix stimuli are effective in the event retailing as much as in general retailing.

When examining the mean score with ranking for the two quota groups of local residents and tourists, the local residents have a wider spread of scores ranging from 3.32 to 4.20 whereas the score for tourists ranged from 3.33 to 4.17 (Table 3). Both groups scored high on product quality, product price and product variety and ranked them as the top three in priority, and this was the same order as a whole and among all marketer controlled stimuli. As anticipated, product quality was the most important factor; quality is often considered to be one of the key attributes representing a product. The high rating of price and variety is also in line with other research, namely that a wide variety of low-priced products captivate consumers upon first sight (Bohen, 2006). By comparison, these three items appear to be more important for locals (with scores of 4.20, 4.16 and 4.05 respectively) than tourists (with score of 4.17, 4.04 and 3.89 respectively) when making purchasing decision at the flower market. One of the explanations is that the Chinese New Year cake is relatively new to tourists so that they may not know which is the best quality, how many varieties of the cake and the normal price, though these three are attractive compared with other stimuli.

Table 3. Means of the Stimuli0

Stimuli	All Respondents	Local Residents	Visitors
Product Quality	4.19 (1)	4.20 (1)	4.17 (1)
Product Price	4.11 (2)	4.16 (2)	4.04 (2)
Product Variety	3.98 (3)	4.05 (3)	3.89 (3)
Price Discount	3.74 (4)	3.68 (5)	3.81 (5)
Cultural Traditions	3.67 (5)	3.53 (10)	3.87 (4)
Stall Decoration	3.66 (6)	3.70 (4)	3.62 (8)
Convenient Location	3.66 (7)	3.67 (6)	3.64 (7)
Healthiness	3.62 (8)	3.63 (7)	3.60 (9)
Sales Person at the Stall	3.55 (9)	3.57 (8)	3.54 (10)
Festival Atmosphere	3.53 (10)	3.55 (9)	3.49 (12)
Free Sample Tasting	3.46 (11)	3.32 (13)	3.66 (6)
Packaging	3.45 (12)	3.40 (11)	3.51 (11)
Accompanied Gift	3.36 (13)	3.37 (12)	3.33 (13)

Note: Rank is shown in the parenthesis

It is of interest that the two non-marketer controlled stimuli, namely cultural traditions and festival atmosphere are ranked in the bottom half for the locals and is the same for the tourists regarding the festival atmosphere. The findings indicate that consumers are more attracted by the marketing mix stimuli than by the non marketer controlled stimuli. A possible explanation is that the competition between event retailers is as high as the other retailing environment, given that the influence of festival atmosphere is constant. The results confirm the other research that purchase desire is motivated by the excitement of attending a special event or festival, but indicate that the spontaneous purchase is largely triggered by marketer controlled stimuli comparatively (Kotler, 1973).

Apart from free sample tasting and cultural traditions, all other marketer controlled stimuli and one non-marketer controlled gave no significant difference between two quota groups. However, there is an influence from install decoration, price discount, convenient location, product attributes, (such as healthiness), salesperson, packaging and accompanying gift on spontaneous purchase in the context of flower market at the Chinese New Year Festival (Table 4).

The non-marketer controlled stimulus of the festival atmosphere has no significant difference on impulse purchase between the local resident and tourist. A possible explanation is that attending the festival is out of normal routine for both groups. As such, time availability would be similar for the local Chinese and tourists as the former would enjoy three days holiday at the Chinese New Year Festival, and the tourists are also on holiday during this time (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). The level of excitement and anticipation would be more or less the same, as the motives for all are to enjoy themselves together at this and to be enriched by the cultural traditions.

Table 4. Comparison of mean between local residents and visitors

Stimuli	**t-value**	**p-value**
Product Quality	.290	.772
Product Price	.931	.353
Product Variety	1.415	.158
Price Discount	-.953	.341
Cultural Traditions	-2.583*	.010*
Stall Decoration	.649	.517
Convenient Location	.250	.803
Healthiness	.269	.788
Sales Person at the Stall	.196	.844
Festival Atmosphere	.513	.609
Free Sample Tasting	-2.394*	.017*
Packaging	-.837	.403
Accompanied Gift	.279	.781

* Significant at 5% level

As shown in Table 4, the t-test revealed a significant difference of one non-marketer controlled stimulus, namely cultural tradition (t-value = -2.583, p = 0.010) and one marketer controlled stimulus, namely free sample tasting (t-value = -2.394, p = 0.017) at the 5% significance level between the two quota groups. The different responses of the local residents and the tourists toward the free sample tasting can be explained by the fact that the former are familiar with the Chinese New Year cake which would reduce the excitement comparatively. Trying a festival product would create a feeling of learning about other cultures, and the experience would be like a personal reward for the latter (Iso-Ahola, 1982). As cultural traditions refer to 'must eat the Chinese New Year Festival cake' in this study, an explanation for the difference is similar to that for free sample tasting. Eating the Chinese New Year Festival cake can fulfil the desire of a cultural enrichment experience as the Chinese New Year Festival cake represents a very important ingredient of the cultural tradition which is attractive to the tourist (Hjalager and Corigliano, 2000; Tikkanen, 2007; Yeung and Yee, 2009).

Conclusion and implications

This study confirms that this retail event is a high impulse purchasing distribution channel. The marketer controlled and non-marketer controlled stimuli have a positive influence on spontaneous purchase in the context of the flower market at the Chinese New Year Festival in Macau. As the non-marketer controlled stimuli have relatively less influence on the attendees, retailers cannot depend only on the festival atmosphere, but must differentiate their product from high competition by implementing appropriate marketing mix stimuli to take up business opportunities within the restricted period of the festival. The findings show that marketing activities can be highly targeted, and they generate a positive economic impact on the community according to the different responses of the two segments, namely local residents and tourists toward the free sample tasting and cultural tradition. The highlight of the cultural tradition is the product together with a free trial which markedly encourages the tourists' impulse purchase. The results require careful interpretation due to the small sample size and non-random sampling method; however, the findings provide an insight into the way of maximising the potential market in the retail event environment. As the festival atmosphere may be different for an infrequently and a frequently occurring event, the effect of each stimulus is probably dependent on the duration of the event and /or the travel plans of the tourists. A further study to include these issues is recommended.

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